

FOREST PRESERVE DETAILED PROJECT WORK PLAN

Fiscal Year 2025
Project # CO-WP-403

<u>Region</u> 4	<u>Project Title</u> Devil's Kitchen Lean-to Relocation and Replacement
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<u>Project Type</u> Modification of Existing Structure/Improvement	<u>Town(s)</u> Hunter	<u>County</u> Greene	<u>Management Unit</u> Indian Head Wilderness
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Description of Existing and Desired Condition(s) for Project

Existing Conditions

The Devil's Kitchen lean-to is nearing the end of its useful life and requires a full replacement as proposed in the 1992 Indian Head-Plateau Mountain Wilderness Unit Management Plan. The lean-to is situated on the Overlook Trail, just over 1 mile from Platte Clove Road via the Overlook Trail and approximately 1.8 miles from the Prediger Road parking lot via the Devil's Path. Due to its proximity to trailheads and to long-distance hiking trails including the Devil's Path and the Long Path, the Devil's Kitchen lean-to provides an excellent camping opportunity for beginner and experienced backpackers alike. Currently, the Overlook Trail is routed between the lean-to and the fire ring so that hikers walk between the structures. Since the Overlook Trail is within the Overlook Primitive Bicycle Corridor, bikes may also occasionally pass through the site.

Desired Conditions

The desired conditions for this project are to protect natural resources from the impacts of dispersed camping by providing camping opportunities in locations that can withstand use. It is also desirable to provide a wilderness experience with outstanding opportunities for solitude so that visitors can experience the sights and sounds of nature. This project aims to meet these desired conditions by removing the existing lean-to and constructing a new lean-to in a more suitable location. The new lean-to will be located further from Cold Kill Creek (also referred to as Coal Kiln Creek) to provide better protection for water resources. This lean-to will continue to concentrate camping impacts to protect the surrounding area from the physical impacts of dispersed camping. Relocating the lean-to will promote opportunities for solitude for hikers, bikers, and campers by removing the structure from the trail corridor thereby limiting visual and auditory interruptions experienced by users.

Description of Project Specifications

A lean-to kit has been prefabricated using natural materials which will be flown into the site using a helicopter. The structure will be constructed on a stone foundation so that there is at least one foot of clearance between the ground and the bottom logs to prevent deterioration due to moisture. The



structure will be stained brown to protect it from the elements while blending with the surrounding environment. The lean-to will be located at least 100 feet from the Overlook Trail and at least 100 feet from Cold Kill Creek. A pad will be created in front of the lean-to by clearing vegetation and organic material. The fire ring will be constructed in this cleared area. A pit privy will be constructed at least 150 feet from the stream. Access trails will be cleared to accommodate traffic from the Overlook Trail to the lean-to and privy. Directional signage will be posted on site.

The existing lean-to site, including fire ring and foundations, will be naturalized to blend with the surrounding environment.

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

- A) Trees to be removed: Up to 20 trees will be cut to create space for the construction of the new lean-to and to establish a safe drop zone for the helicopter. See attached tree tally.
- B) Earthwork and Disturbance, Including Identification of Work Outside the Project Footprint: Earthwork will be limited to site preparation for the installation of the lean-to and privy. Site preparation will include some grading to create a suitable surface to construct stone foundations for the lean-to and privy. Minor alterations will be made to ensure water drains away from the structure. Access trails will be cleared of organic material and will be routed to minimize the need for tread hardening. Stone needed for this project will be harvested on site. Borrow pits and any disturbed areas outside of the final project footprint will be naturalized to blend with the surrounding environment.
- C) Impacts to Streams, Waterbodies, and Wetlands: The new lean-to will be located at least 100 feet from Cold Kill Creek, also known as Coal Kiln Creek. The new privy will be located at least 150 feet from the creek.
- D) Identification of Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species: There are no known occurrences of rare, threatened, or endangered species within ¼ mile of the project site.

Analysis of Project Location and Design Alternatives

- 1) No Action – If no action is taken the Devil’s Kitchen lean-to will fall further into disrepair and will be decommissioned in the interest of public safety. This will likely result in an increase in dispersed camping which will negatively impact natural resources and the wilderness setting.
- 2) Use existing lean-to site – Maintaining the existing lean-to site would reduce the amount of tree cutting required as part of this project, however the existing lean-to is very close to the stream and directly in the path of the trail. This is not a desirable condition for resource protection or for the visitor experience and would not align with the 1992 Indian Head-Plateau Mountain Wilderness UMP. For these reasons, this is not the preferred alternative.
- 3) Alternative location – Several locations were considered but the final site was selected as it minimizes the level of terrain alteration and tree cutting required to complete the project and avoids locations that may be more sensitive to disturbance.

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

A helicopter will be used to transport the lean-to kit to the site. Helicopter trips will take place over the course of one day. A chainsaw will be used during the spring or fall chainsaw window to clear trees from the project area.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Description of Applicable Standards for Accessibility by People with Disabilities

This project does not incorporate accessible design standards. Significant modifications to the Overlook Trail and/or Devil's Path would be required to provide access to this lean-to for people with disabilities. These modifications would fundamentally alter the character of the area and are beyond the scope of this project.

Other Relevant Considerations

Prepared by (Name & Title): Alicia van der Veur
Phone: 607-652-3698

Date: 9/3/2025

Approvals:

Comments:

Bill Schryver

Regional Program Manager
Date: 9/15/2025

Sean Mahar

Regional Director
Date: 11/18/25

Pete [Signature]

On Behalf of the Division Director
Date: 11/6/2025

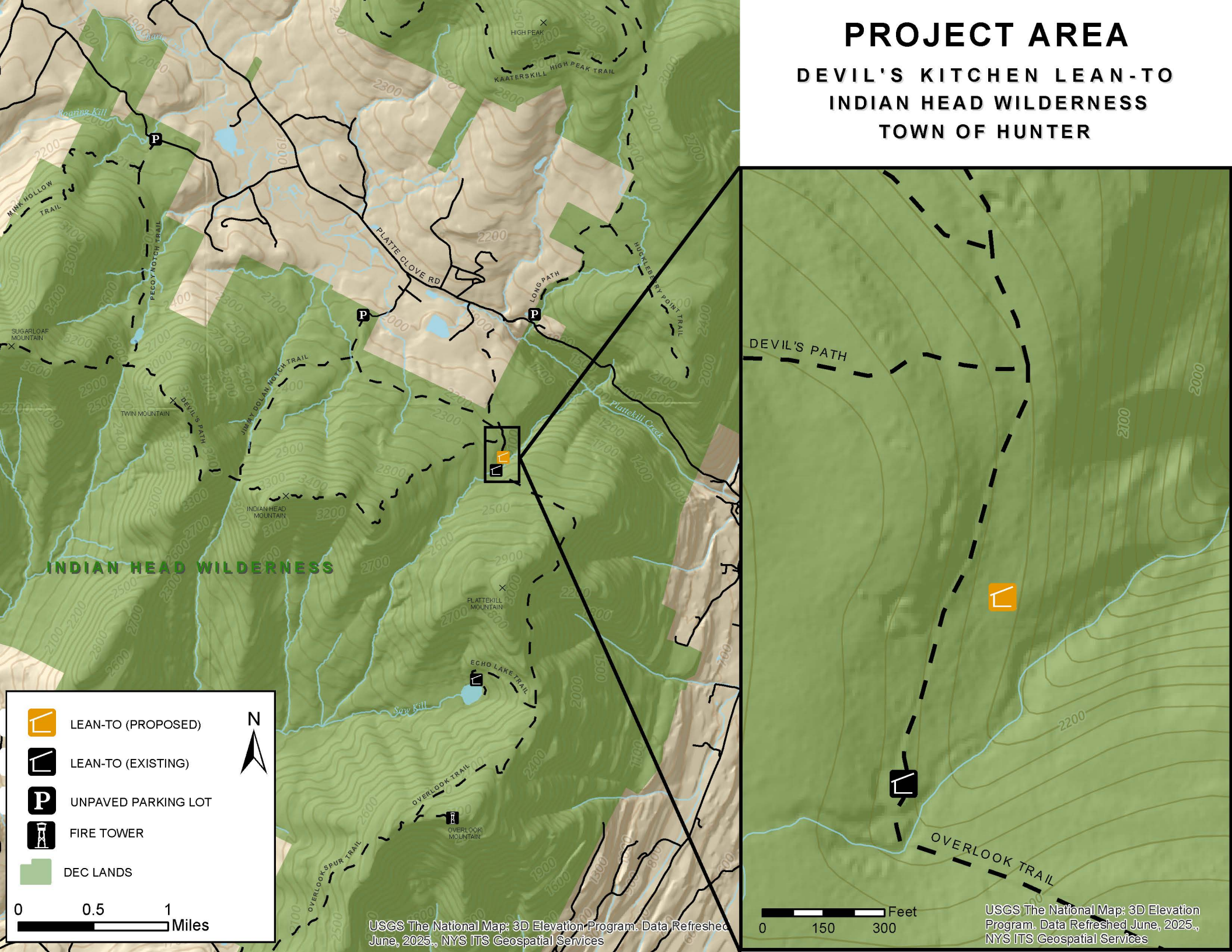
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

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"/>		1992 Indian Head-Plateau Mountain Wilderness Unit Management Plan
	Tree Cutting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alicia van der Veur	
	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"/>	Alicia van der Veur	Submitted with work plan
	Commissioner (aircraft, motorized equipment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alicia van der Veur	Submitted with work plan
	Flight Request	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alicia van der Veur	To be submitted upon work plan 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	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"/>		



PROJECT AREA

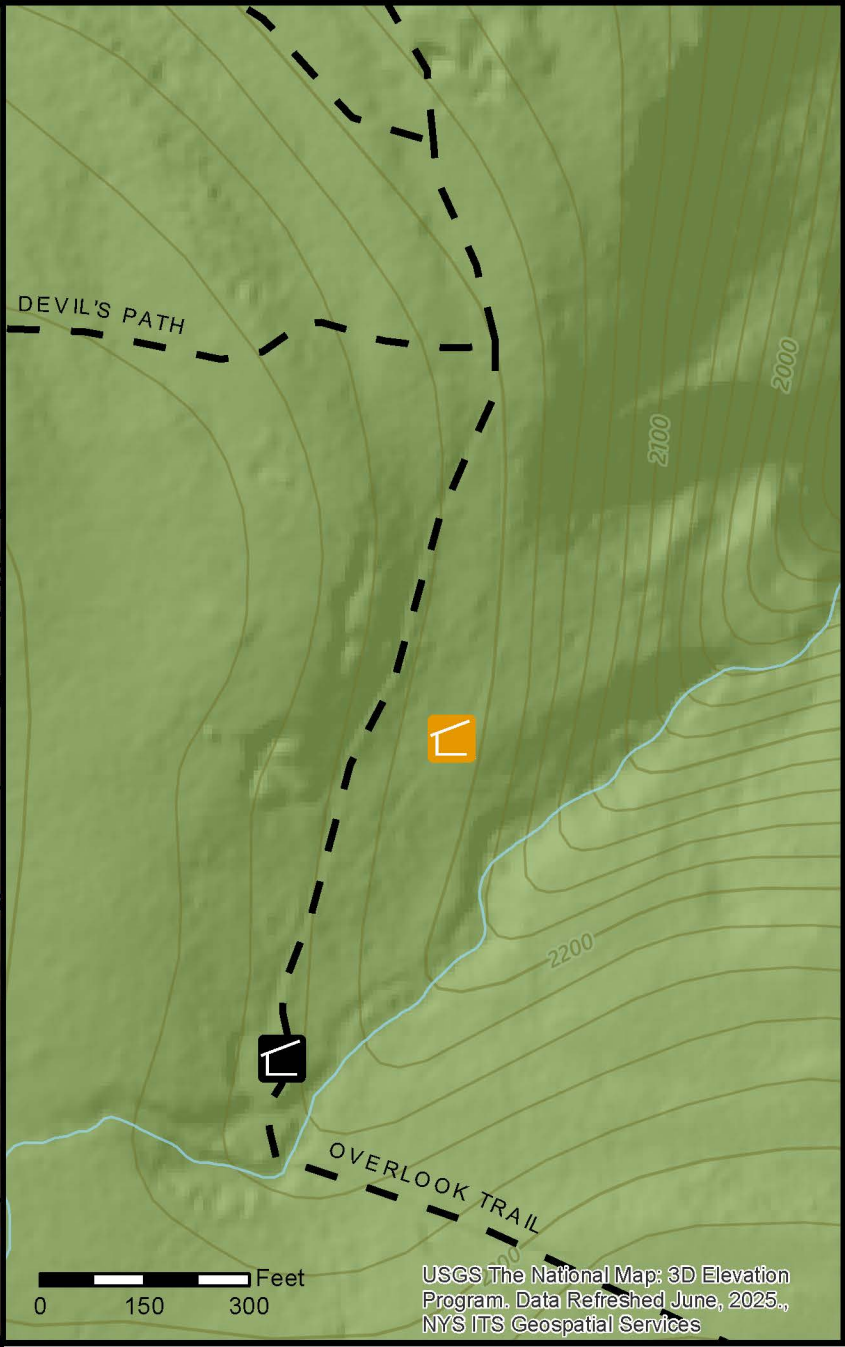
DEVIL'S KITCHEN LEAN-TO
INDIAN HEAD WILDERNESS
TOWN OF HUNTER



- LEAN-TO (PROPOSED)
- LEAN-TO (EXISTING)
- UNPAVED PARKING LOT
- FIRE TOWER
- DEC LANDS

0 0.5 1 Miles

N



FOREST PRESERVE WORK PLAN TREE TALLY

Project Name: Devil's Kitchen Lean-to Relocation and Replacement
 State Land Unit: Indian Head Wilderness
 County: Greene Town: Hunter
 Date Tallied: 04/28/2025
 Tallied By: Alicia van der Veur

Species	Diameter															Total
	1 to 3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	
BE		1	6		2											9
SM																1
HHB		4														4
WA							1	1		1						2
	4															4
Total	4	5	6		2			1		1	1					20

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".

- When and if these trails are built, the sections of trails by-passed in Pecoy Notch and Mink Hollow will be closed.

Action 6

Construct a new parking lot on Mink Hollow Road, north of Lake Hill, on the newly-acquired Olderbark Mountain parcel.

- Present parking is a snowplow turnaround at the end of Town maintenance.

Action 7

Provide a stream crossing where the trail crosses the Beaver Kill in Mink Hollow 0.25 mile north of the parking in Mink Hollow south. Large boulders placed as stepping stones should be sufficient and is preferable to a bridge.

Action 8

Place a bulletin board at the trailhead on the south end of the Mink Hollow Trail.

- Bulletin boards are informational and educational tools.

B. Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Facilities

Action 1

Retain the general location of all three (3) lean-tos for the time-being. None of these are in violation of the 150-ft. rule since all are specifically-designated camping sites.

- Echo Lake lean-to will not be maintained. Within this five-year plan, it will be replaced by a new one at another location when the present one is no longer safe or habitable.
- Devil's Kitchen lean-to has a new roof and floor so will not be replaced so soon. It will no longer be maintained and will be replaced by a new one at another location when no longer safe or habitable. This will probably not occur until after the first revision of the Plan in years 6 to 10.
- Mink Hollow lean-to will be maintained at the present site which is convenient to a trails intersection.