

FOREST PRESERVE DETAILED PROJECT WORK PLAN

Fiscal Year 2025
Project # CO-WP-402

<u>Region</u> 3	<u>Project Title</u> Pine Hill Day Use Area and Shandaken Wild Forest Improvements
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<u>Project Type</u> Expansion of Existing Structure/Improvement	<u>Town(s)</u> Shandaken	<u>County</u> Ulster	<u>Management Unit</u> Pine Hill Day Use Area & Shandaken Wild Forest
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Description of Existing and Desired Condition(s) for Project

The NYSDEC (DEC) has participated in Ulster County’s efforts to convert a 2.5 mile stretch of the abandoned Ulster & Delaware Railroad Corridor into a public, multi-use recreational trail from the Belleayre Beach Day Use Area in Pine Hill to Highmount in the Town of Shandaken, Ulster County. Much of this portion of the rail line adjoins Forest Preserve lands and lands under management of the Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA). Currently, there is not a direct trail between the Pine Hill Day Use Area, and Shandaken Wild Forest (SWF) that connects people to the adjacent State lands and to the Ulster County Rail trail. By building a 14-car parking area and creating new trail linkages, this project will enhance emergency and recreational access to DEC and County owned lands. This is a cooperative project between ORDA, DEC and Ulster County to provide visitors with a continuous trail experience from the Pine Hill DUA to the Ulster County rail trail and the multi-use trails on the Shandaken Wild Forest.

The 2023 Unit Management Plan Amendment for Belleayre Mountain (UMPA) approved a Master Plan for Hiking and Biking at Belleayre Mountain. The future Rail Trail connections as well as connections to SWF were considered and approved (pg. 4) and the UMPA identified and approved parking and trailhead access points at Belleayre Beach. Page 16 of the 2023 UMPA states that, “The potential for a shared use rail trail utilizing the Ulster and Delaware Railroad grade is integral to the Intensive Use trail systems as well as broader connections”. This work plan details the scope of work for a foot trail that will provide access to the rail trail corridor from the Pine Hill Day Use Area (DUA). Locations for a two-way, single-track mountain bike trail that would allow bicycles to reach the trail network without using the foot trail described in this work plan are being evaluated separately by DEC and will be the subject of a separate work plan.

To promote visitor enjoyment and access to State and County lands, as well as to capitalize on Ulster County’s and ORDA’s capital investments in the Ulster County Rail trail, the project’s desired condition is to improve access to the Ulster County Rail Trail and the surrounding trail networks on Shandaken Wild Forest and Belleayre Intensive Use Area. Once completed, this project will serve as an important recreational resource that will be a valuable addition to the Belleayre region.

Description of Project Specifications

The proposed improvements offer an opportunity to improve public access to the multi-use, Ulster County Rail Trail, Shandaken Wild Forest and Belleayre Mountain Ski Center, with its network of cross country, mountain bike and hiking trails.

Within the Pine Hill (Belleayre Beach) Day Use Area, the proposed projects include:

- Construction of a paved, new parking area adjacent to Friendship Manor Road that provides 14 parking spaces which will include one accessible parking spot.
- Expansion of a paved 50' section of roadway by 6' just before the entrance to Friendship bridge to serve as access from the parking area to all facilities at the day use area.
- Widen the existing, paved Belleayre Beach Access Road 6' from the covered bridge to the entrance of the existing Belleayre Beach parking lot. The Final roadway will have a 10-foot travel lane with a 6' path immediately adjacent for 400' and will have a paved surface.
- Where existing paved path terminates at the restroom building, construct an 8' wide, 175' long path with crushed stone to the Rail Trail access point located on the County land boundary. This path will serve as pedestrian access to the SWF and the rail trail and will also be utilized by motor vehicles and equipment for emergency access and maintenance activities when necessary. The width of the path will be reduced to 6' wide following the conclusion of construction activities.

Within Shandaken Wild Forest the proposed project includes:

- Improvement and resurfacing of a 50' long, 8' wide former logging road to allow equipment and emergency access to the Ulster County railroad bed. Once completed, this section of trail will have a 6' wide gravel surface and will serve as foot trail connection to the SWF and Belleayre Intensive Use Area trail network and to the Ulster County Rail Trail. The vegetative corridor will be maintained to allow for emergency access to the rail trail.

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

A. Trees to be removed:

There is no tree cutting proposed for this project on DEC land. All tree cutting will occur on Ulster County lands.

B. Earthwork and disturbance:

Earthwork will be needed to remove organic matter down to mineral soil and to create a level footprint on the parking area and on the sections of trail that will be constructed.

C. Impacts to Stream, Waterbodies and Wetlands:

Trail construction will not take place in wetland areas. Silt fencing will be placed 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 motorized equipment or vehicles 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 any natural resource degradation that may occur during trail construction.

D. Identification of Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species:

There are no anticipated impacts to endangered, threatened or special concern wildlife species, rare plant, animal or natural community occurrences or other significant habitats within ¼ mile of the project area.

Analysis of Project Location and Design Alternatives

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative): Construct parking area and new trail connections to access DEC lands and Ulster County Rail Trail

Construct a 14-car parking area on Friendship Manor Rd to provide year-round access to the Pine Hill DUA, and construct 3 sections of trail that will connect visitors to trail networks on Shandaken Wild Forest, Belleayre Intensive Use area and to the Ulster County Rail Trail.

Alternative 2: Provide an alternative parking location and trail connection location to connect visitors to the Ulster County Rail Trail

The 1989 UMPA for Belleayre Mountain expressly directs DEC to construct vehicle parking to accommodate year-round intensive recreation opportunities to enhance tourism in the region. The UMPA also states that vehicle parking area will be constructed to accommodate both winter and summer season recreational pursuits on the Belleayre Mountain DUA. The only location that can accommodate winter use when the seasonal access gate is closed is the proposed location for the parking area on Friendship Manor Rd.

No Action: No action alternative

The no action alternative involves managing the Pine Hill DUA and Shandaken Wild Forest “as is” without providing any new improvements or trail connections. The no action alternative would have a negative impact on the enjoyment, reliability and safety of the public without upgrading infrastructure to connect the Pine Hill DUA to SWF and to the Ulster County Rail Trail.

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

The trail will be constructed primarily using motorized equipment and motor vehicles. Dump trucks will be needed to haul materials. For the parking lot construction on Friendship Manor Rd., an excavator and a dozer will perform surface development. Excavator, dozer, and dump truck will be used for the construction of the additional parking spaces.

Description of Applicable Standards for Accessibility by People with Disabilities

The new parking area will contain an accessible parking space and consist of a firm and stable surface and meet ADA guidelines.

Other Relevant Considerations

The proposed project will enhance public safety and the quality of the visitor experience by improving the capacity of the existing area to accommodate the recreational demand for access to the Shandaken Wild Forest, Belleayre Mountain Ski Center Pine Hill DUA and the Ulster County Rail Trail.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

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Phone: (845)-256-3075

Date: 9/11/2025

Approvals:

Comments:



Regional Program Manager
Date: 11/25/25



Regional Director
Date: 11/25/25



On Behalf of the Division Director
Date: 11/24/2025

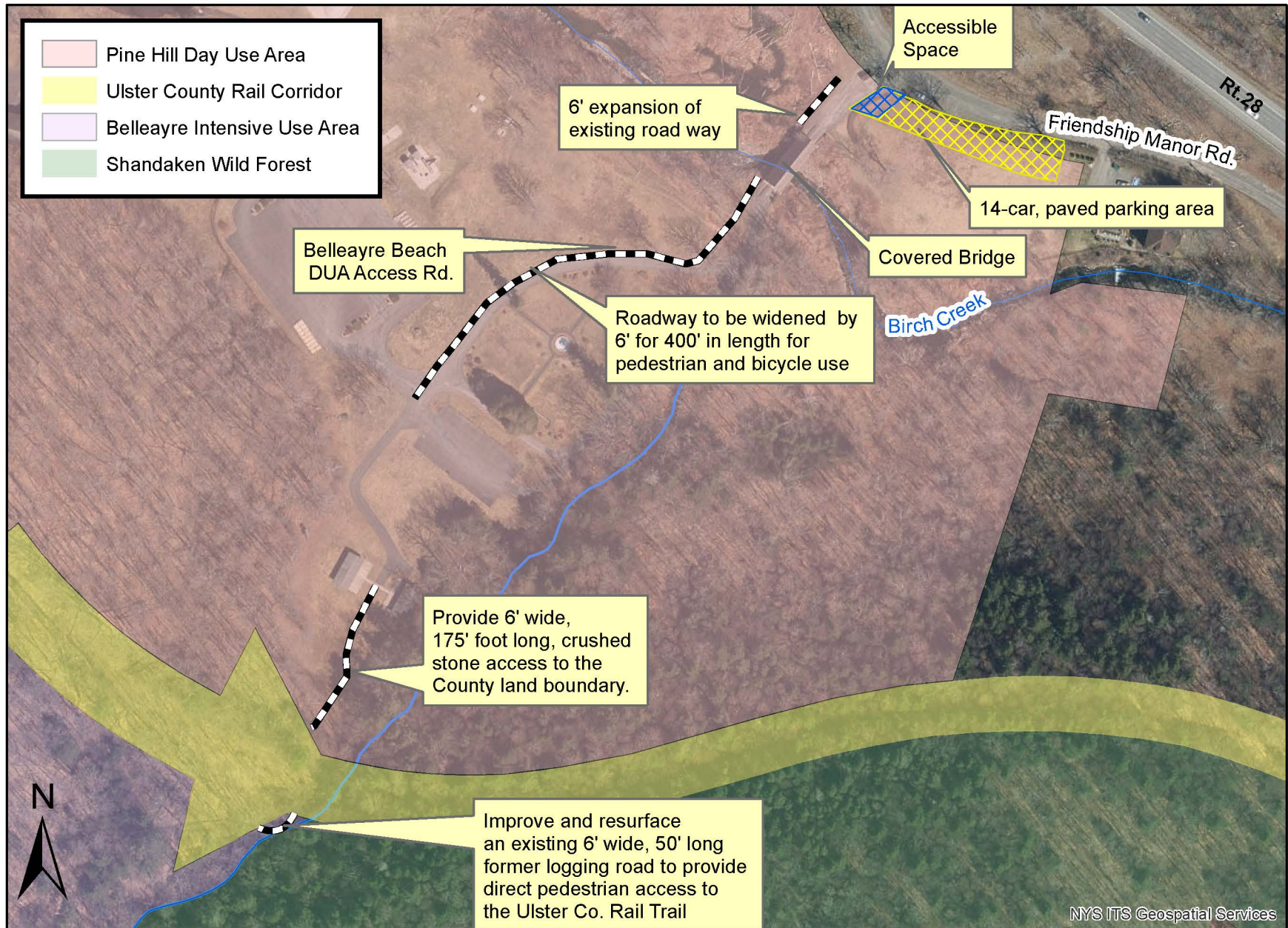


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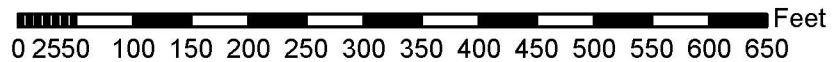
REGULATORY CLEARANCE CHECKLIST – STATE LANDS and CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROJECTS					
PROGRAM	PERMIT	REQUIRED		SECURED BY	COMMENTS
		YES	NO	(NAME)	
Air Resources	Restricted Burning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Mineral Resources	Mining	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pine Roehrs	
	Tree Cutting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ian Thompson	
	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pine Roehrs	
	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"/>		



Pine Hill DUA & Shandaken Wild Forest Improvements



NYS ITS Geospatial Services



Location of the proposed 14 car parking area in a field along Friendship Manor Rd.



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

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