FOREST PRESERVE DETAILED PROJECT WORK PLAN

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Project # CO-WP-418

Region	Project Title
5	Multi-Use Trail Improvements

Project Type	Town(s)	County	Management Unit
Modification of Existing Structure/Improvement	Santa Clara	Franklin	Fish Creek Pond Public Campground

Description of Existing and Desired Condition(s) for Project

Existing Conditions

Surrounded by forests and ponds, Fish Creek Pond Campground is a seasonal facility that offers camping and many other recreation opportunities for visitors. It is one of the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC's) largest and most popular campgrounds and is on state Forest Preserve land classified as Intensive Use. Currently, there exists an approximately 4.5-mile multipurpose trail that travels around and through the entire campground. This trail consists of two sections; a paved section between the southeastern shore of Fish Creek Pond and Route 30, and an unpaved section within the campground made of varying surfaces, such as gravel, compacted surface and earth/grass. The majority of the unpaved sections of trail utilize an existing maintained utility corridor and runs both adjacent to the campground road and in the forest behind campground infrastructure.

A little over a half mile from the western end of Fish Creek Pond Campground is Rollins Pond Campground, and the existing trail around Fish Creek Pond has served as a valuable feature for those wishing to utilize non-motorized means to travel between the two campgrounds.

In 2025, the completion of the Adirondack Rail Trail, which runs to the west of Rollins Pond Campground, presented a unique opportunity to connect both campgrounds to the Rail Trail itself as well as the communities of Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake.

Desired Conditions

In accordance with the 2021 Fish Creek Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan (UMP), the desired conditions for this project is to "resurface the multipurpose trail with pavement or an alternative material such as stone dust that will improve the surface in a manner that encourages use by more visitors". Per the UMP, resurfacing will be implemented on the unpaved trail section because "the condition of the trail on the corridor discourages use by standard bicycle riders, or people with

limited mobility. As a result, more people are walking and riding along the roads which adds to the congestion and safety concerns…" at this facility. The improved trail will encourage safer recreation opportunities away from the road and will provide accessible access to users of all abilities. The project will involve tree removal and regrading of trail sections as needed or required by accessibility standards.

This project will also serve as the first phase of connecting the Fish Creek Pond and Rollins Pond campgrounds to the Adirondack Rail Trail. The level of visitation to Fish Creek Pond, its Intensive Use classification, and the multi-use/accessible designation of the improved campground trail create a unique opportunity, not found in any other DEC campground, to connect a pre-existing visitor base of varying abilities to the Rail Trail without compromising the natural resources or social setting of the campground facility.

To provide the continuity of experience found on the Rail Trail, the campground trail will accommodate two-way bicycle and pedestrian traffic, allowing for safe passing and clear sight lines and connections to campground amenities and other accessible elements. These improvements will increase accessible recreation opportunities by allowing more visitors to use the trail, improve roadway safety by reducing congestion within the campground, and focus trail access to safe locations.

Description of Project Specifications

The trail improvements involve refinishing a section of the paved trail and improving the existing unpaved trail by establishing a trail with a compact surface limited to an 8-foot tread.

The entire paved section will not be refinished at this time; however, several sections will be either refinished or extended for safety purposes. A 100 linear foot section of paved trail will require the existing asphalt to be milled and then repaved with new asphalt due to deterioration from tree roots. This section is near the day use area where the trail runs alongside Route 30. Additionally, the section of paved trail that enters the campground near the rear ticket booth will be extended a short distance, allowing trail users to enter the campground roadway beyond the vehicle traffic at the rear ticket booth to avoid accidents.

The existing unpaved trail sections will be finished with either asphalt or compacted stone dust and will be confined to an 8-foot trail tread width. Some sections will be regraded to provide an accessible grade for all trail users. Regrading will be limited to the existing unpaved trail sections as the topography varies more compared to the existing paved section. Several existing trail access points will be improved to provide accessible access to existing campground features including the accessible fishing pier, bathhouse, amphitheater and playground. Trail access points will be 6 feet wide and will include additional space for bicycle racks.

A total trail corridor of 13' was inventoried for vegetative impacts. This corridor represents a 2.5' buffer on both sides of the tread. The corridor was surveyed for inventory purposes to account for potential field adjustments due to unforeseen constraints during construction.

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

Utilizing the existing trail corridor significantly reduces tree removal, earthwork and disturbance.

A) Trees to be removed: There are 160 trees 3 inches or greater diameter at breast height (DBH) and 35 trees between 1 and 3 inches DBH within the surveyed 13' trail corridor. Only trees located in the 8' trail tread will be removed during initial construction. Trees in the contingency buffer will only be removed in instances where field constraints require a minor trail reroute. Any tree removal outside the initial 8' trail corridor will require prior approval by DEC's project point of contact. The final count of trees removed will be less than the tally above as most of the contingency buffer is not expected to be utilized. It is provided here as the maximum scope of construction impacts because the project schedule does not allow time for the work plan amendment process. For tree removal necessary to establish the 8' trail tread, most are in areas that require grading to achieve accessible slopes as established by the ADA and to provide safe trail access points for patrons. Additional efforts to reduce vegetative impacts will be made throughout the implementation of this project where feasible. Trees will be chipped and dispersed on-site. Please see the Forest Preserve Tree Tally below identified as 'Fish Creek Campground Bike Path' for more detail.

Additionally, 14 trees 3 inches or greater DBH may be affected by the excavation and repaving of the 100 linear foot paved section of the trail due to the presence of tree roots growing under the trail. Please see the second Forest Preserve Tree Tally below identified as 'Fish Creek Campground Tree Root Damage' for more detail.

FOREST PRESERVE WORK PLAN TREE TALLY

Project Name: Fish Creek Campground Bike Path
State Land Unit: Fish Creek Campground Intensive Use Area
County: Franklin Town: Santa Clara
Date Tallied: 04/02/2025
Tallied By: Steve Guglielmi & Zebulin Edwards

Species	Diameter																Total
	1 to 3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	36	
White pine		5	1		2	1	1	1	3	2	6	2	1	1	2	1	29
Red pine		2	3	3	5	7	8	13	4	9	5		1	1			61
Red maple		11	4	3	1			1	2								22
Black cherry						1			1		1	1					4
Red spruce						1											1
Hemlock						3		2	1								6
White birch			2	1		4	2	3									12
Cedar		3															3
Balsam fir		2	1	1			1										5
Yellow birch		4	2														6
Sugar maple		3	1	3	1	1			1		1	2					13
Quaking aspen							1										1
Total	35	30	14	11	9	18	13	20	12	11	13	5	2	2	2	1	195

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".

FOREST PRESERVE WORK PLAN TREE TALLY

Project Name: Fish Creek Campground Tree Roots Damage
State Land Unit:
County: Franklin Town: Santa Clara
Date Tallied: 04/02/2025
Tallied By: Steve Guglielmi & Zebulin Edwards

Species	Diameter															Total
	1 to 3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	
White pine					1	1	1		1	1	2		1	2	1	11
Red pine				1						1						2
Red maple				1												1
Total				2	1	1	1		1	2	2		1	2	1	14

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".

B) **Earthwork and Disturbance:** Most of the work for this project will occur within the existing trail corridor which includes both the paved and unpaved sections. The unpaved sections of trail within the campground proper were originally constructed in the footprint of the underground utility corridor to reduce disturbance. There will also be several places where the trail joins the campground road before continuing back into the woods thereby minimizing the overall tree removal, earthwork and disturbance necessary for this project. Trail regrading will be limited to trail sections with mild to moderate variations in terrain that currently do not meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for slope grades.

C) **Impacts to Streams, Waterbodies, and Wetlands:** Impacts to streams, waterbodies, and wetlands will be avoided by conducting work in previously disturbed areas outside of these freshwater resources, and by using proper erosion and sediment controls along the trail where necessary. The southern section of the trail in the campground proper is diverted to the campground road for a shared-use section of approximately 0.35 miles to avoid impacts to a nearby wetland that is immediately west of the road. Applicable erosion and sediment controls for this project include biodegradable sediment filter logs, rolled erosion control blankets, silt fencing for stockpiles, and a stabilized construction entrance.

D) **Identification of Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species:** There are no rare, threatened or endangered species within 0.25 miles of the project site.

Analysis of Project Location and Design Alternatives

The project location is the existing trail at Fish Creek Pond Campground. The preferred alternative for this project is to improve this existing trail as it significantly reduces impacts to natural resources by using an existing trail and its corridor. Other alternatives, which are listed below, would increase the amount of tree removal and earthwork necessary to complete the project.

No action – Maintaining the trail in its current condition and alignment essentially limits safe recreation opportunities for all visitors. Visitors would still have access to the trail, though, without improvements its use would be limited to those without disabilities. This project is designed to increase user safety and accessible recreation opportunities for all visitors.

Construct a new trail – Constructing a new trail would significantly increase tree removal and disturbance in the Forest Preserve. This would involve the creation of a new trail corridor which would have greater tree density than the existing trail corridor. Additionally, it would require more earthwork to grade a new trail to a safe and usable condition due to the varying topography that exists beyond the existing trail corridor. Another concern with this alternative is that the distribution of wetlands in the area would significantly limit or possibly prevent the construction of a new trail.

Figure 1 – Fish Creek Pond Campground Map

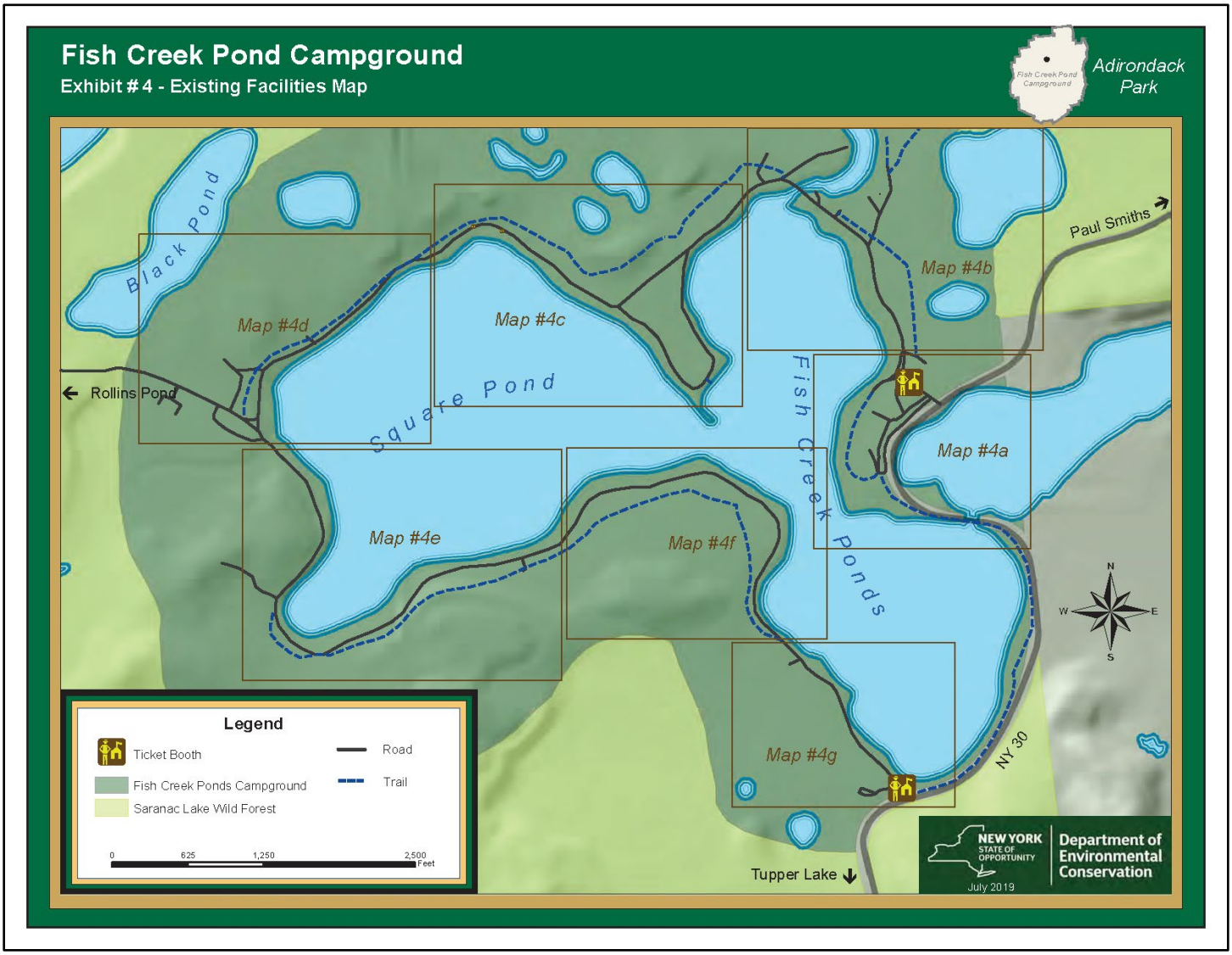


Figure 2 – Project Location Map

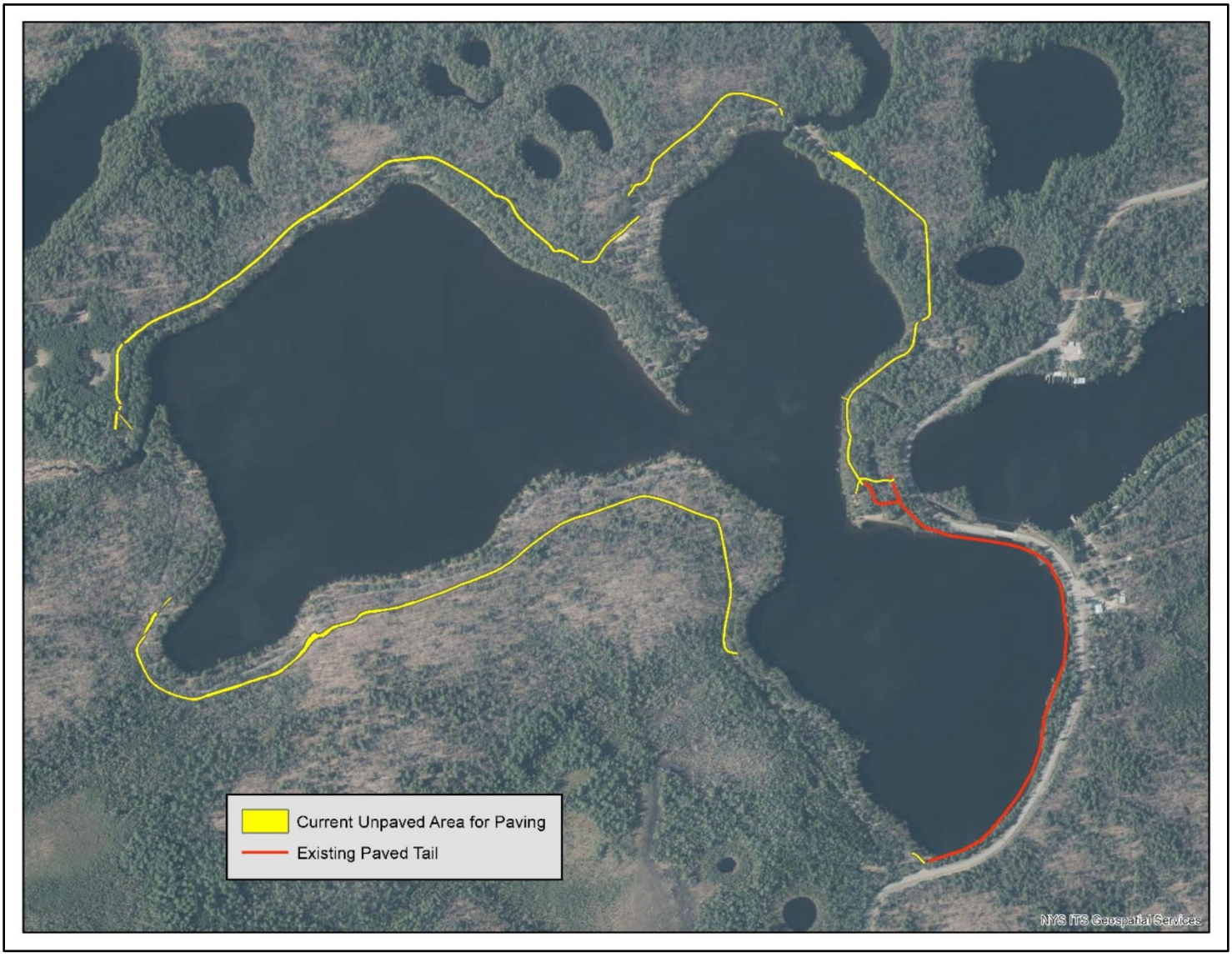
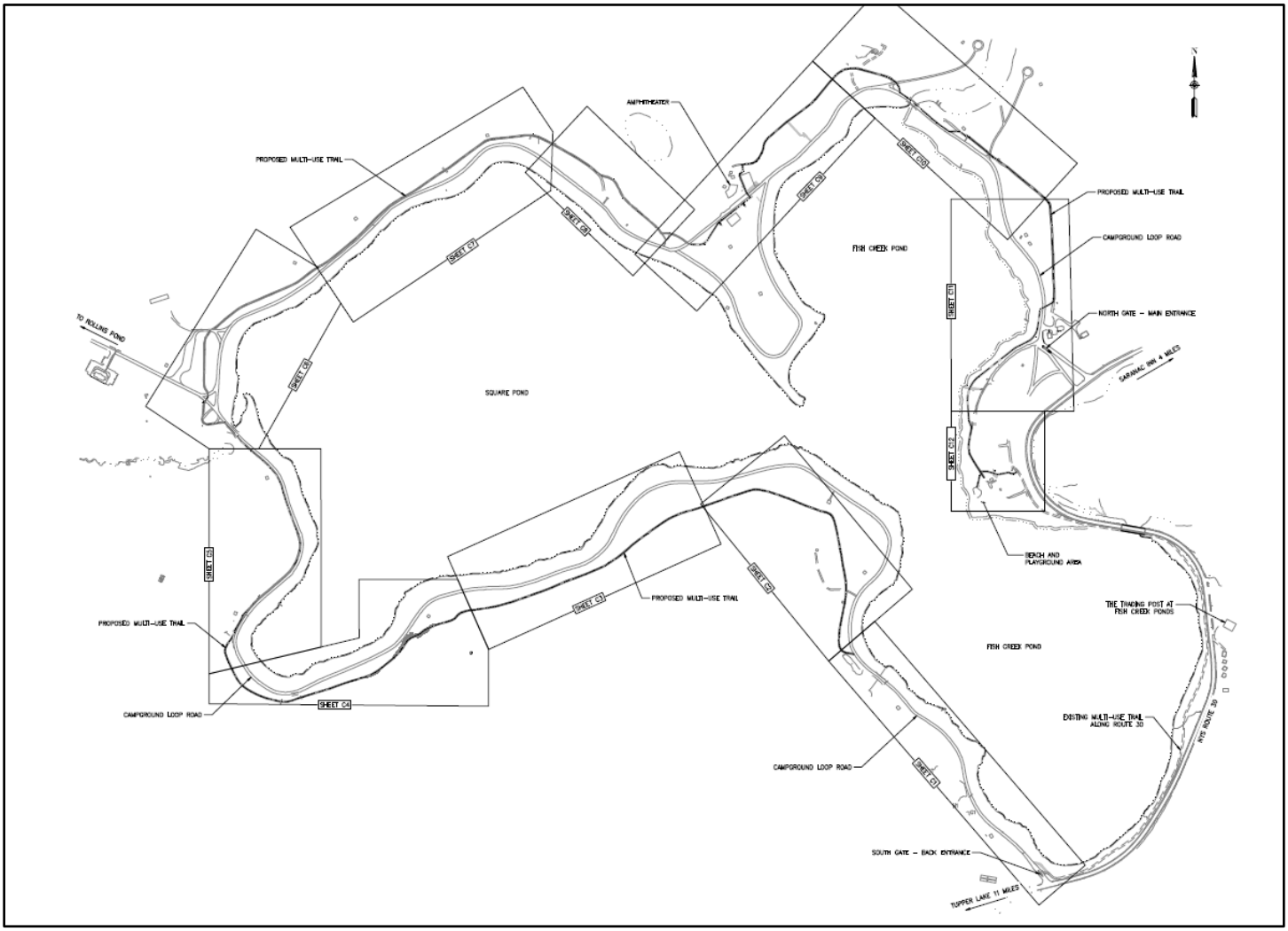


Figure 3 – Detailed Project Location Map



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

Excavators, skid steers, dump trucks, an asphalt paver or stone dust roller compacter, and pickup trucks are examples of typical motorized construction equipment that will be used for trail improvements. A chainsaw and chipper will be used for tree removal.

Description of Applicable Standards for Accessibility by People with Disabilities

The ADA requires that new construction and alteration projects are designed to be accessible to people with disabilities. The trail improvements will be implemented using the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Applicable standards for this project can be found in Chapter 3: Building Blocks, Chapter 4: Accessible Routes, and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Chapter 10: Recreation Facilities.

The project is designed to enhance recreation opportunities for all, specifically for people with disabilities by providing trail access where there previously was minimal or none.

Other Relevant Considerations

None.

Prepared by (Name & Title): Mitchell Krah, EPS 1 Date: 12/12/2025
Phone: (518) 897-1205

Approvals:

Regional Program Manager
Date: 12/15/2025

Regional Director
Date: **02/27/2026**

On Behalf of the Division Director
Date: 02/26/2026

Comments:
Reviewed by Regional Forester Robert Daley on 12/23/2025

REGULATORY CLEARANCE CHECKLIST – STATE LANDS and CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROJECTS					
PROGRAM	PERMIT	REQUIRED		SECURED BY	COMMENTS
		YES	NO	(NAME)	
Air Resources	Restricted Burning	☐	☒		
Mineral Resources	Mining	☐	☒		
Materials Management	Solid Waste Mgt. Fac.	☐	☒		
Water	Dam Safety Review	☐	☒		
	Const. in Flood Hazard	☐	☒		
	Public Water Supply	☐	☒		
	SPDES	☐	☒		
Spills Management	Petro. Bulk Storage	☐	☒		
Lands and Forests	Unit Management Plan	☒	☐	NYS DEC	2021 Fish Creek Pond Public Campground UMP
	Tree Cutting	☒	☐	Mitchell Krah	Pending approval through this workplan
	Protected Native Plants	☐	☒		
	Historic Preservation	☐	☒		
Fish and Wildlife	Freshwater Wetlands	☐	☒		
	Wild Scenic & Rec. River	☐	☒		
Compliance Services	Other Protection of Waters	☐	☒		
	EAF	☐	☒		
	Negative Declaration	☐	☒		
	Env. Impact Statement	☐	☒		
	Water Quality Cert.	☐	☒		
DEC (other)	CP-17	☐	☒		
	Commissioner (aircraft,motorized equipment)	☐	☒		
	Flight Request	☐	☒		
	Contract Clearance Sh.	☐	☒		
	DOB Exemption	☐	☒		
Other Agencies	APA MOU	☐	☒		
	APA Wetlands Permit	☐	☒		
	Corps. of Engineers	☐	☒		
	Building Permits	☐	☒		
	Local Permits	☐	☒		
	Easements	☐	☒		
	Highway Enter DOT	☐	☒		
	Wastewater Disposal	☐	☒		

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY | Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Operations | Bureau of Recreation

Fish Creek Pond Public Campground

Unit Management Plan

FINAL

Town of Santa Clara, Franklin County, New York

DECEMBER 2021

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Operations, 3rd Floor
625 Broadway, Albany, NY12233

Governor KATHY C. HOCHUL | Commissioner BASIL SEGGOS

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Record

FROM: Basil Seggos

SUBJECT: Fish Creek Pond Campground

The Fish Creek Pond Campground Unit Management Plan has been completed.

The UMP is consistent with Environmental Conservation Law, and Department Rules, Regulations and Policies and is hereby approved and adopted.

Basil Seggos
Commissioner
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Date: 11/17/21

for an aquatic invasive species monitoring or a boat washing station. This management action proposes to reconstruct the boat launch ramp near the fishing pier west of the day-use parking lot. The proposed design will take into consideration the need for adequate clearance for vehicles and trailers to create a safe location for an aquatic invasive species monitoring and appropriate infrastructure for a boat washing station. This proposal will reduce congestion at the boat launch, provide a more functional launch area, afford adequate parking, and reduce traffic in the camping loops. The existing launch area will be retained as a roof top launch site; no ramp for trailered boats will be provided.

6. Expand extra car parking sites

Many campers bring additional vehicles resulting in the need for additional parking spots. Parking in the campsites is limited to a single vehicle with trailer and parking along campground roads is prohibited. Currently, additional car parking is permitted at the day-use area, amphitheater and shower building parking lots as well as at smaller designated sites near campsites #203, #245, #263, #270 and #293. However, additional parking space is still needed. This management action proposes enlarging the existing parking lots where possible by 3-5 parking spots (Approx. 900-2500sf each). In addition, this management action proposes formalizing three to five additional parking spots at the proposed reconstructed comfort stations. Due to the fact that much of the proposed locations are heavily impacted by informal parking, clearing of existing vegetation and topographic alterations will be minimized.

7. Make improvements at amphitheater

The amphitheater area is a very popular location within the campground offering scheduled programs, supervised activities, a swing set, and volleyball and basketball facilities. The existing amphitheater seating is in poor condition and the stage area needs structural and electrical repairs. The swing set is rustic and does not meet current ASTM design standards. This management action proposes to repair the amphitheater seating, make required improvements to the electrical systems and replace the swings with a small playground structure which will comply with design standards.

8. Improve bike path

In 2004, the overhead utilities and sewer lines were buried throughout the campground creating an opening through the woods in many places away from the road. Over four miles of this utility corridor were graded, hardened in sections with gravel, and seeded in others for a grass surface to create a multipurpose trail. As the surface of this trail has deteriorated over the years, today this trail is most often utilized by people walking or riding mountain bikes. Unlike the paved section of trail along Route

30, the condition of the trail on the corridor discourages use by standard bicycle riders, or people with limited mobility. As a result, more people are walking and riding along the roads which adds to the congestion and safety concerns previously noted in this plan. This management action proposes to resurface the multipurpose trail with pavement or an alternative material such as stone dust that will improve the surface in a manner that encourages use by more visitors. It will also be proposed in future UMPs to extend the trail to Rollins Pond Campground. This will further help alleviate congestion and safety concerns on the road between the two facilities. Signage will be posted to notify users of grades, curves and junctions. Sections of the existing trail with excessive grades will not be improved and users will be directed onto the roads in those locations. Connectors to campground roads will permit access to the trail at various locations. Sections of improved trail that meet accessibility standards will be marked for ADA access (see exhibit 15).

9. Construct parking lot at Floodwood trailhead

The Floodwood trailhead is located near comfort station #8 providing access to a network of hiking trails leading to Floodwood Pond, Little Square Pond, Follensby Clear Pond and others. There is no formally designated parking at the trailhead and hikers often park in places that block access to campsites and the comfort station. This management action proposes building a 5-car parking (approx. 2,500-3,000sq/ft) lot at a location near the trailhead. Clearing of existing vegetation and topographic alterations will be minimized as much of the proposed location is currently heavily impacted by informal parking by trail users.

10. Extend internet connection through campground to Rollins Pond

Fish Creek Ponds campground has a high-speed internet connection at the entrance. The connection facilitates reservations, point of sale transactions and staff reporting. It also provides weather information which is used to inform campers of impending serious storms in a timely manner. Rollins Pond campground operates with a satellite connection that is slower, less reliable and often fails at the critical time when weather data is most valuable. This management action proposes to co-locate the high-speed data wiring through the campground, through lands currently classified as Wild Forest, to the entrance and into the Rollins Pond Intensive Use Area along the existing utility corridor that connects the two facilities. This is for use by staff for official/administrative purposes, not the public.