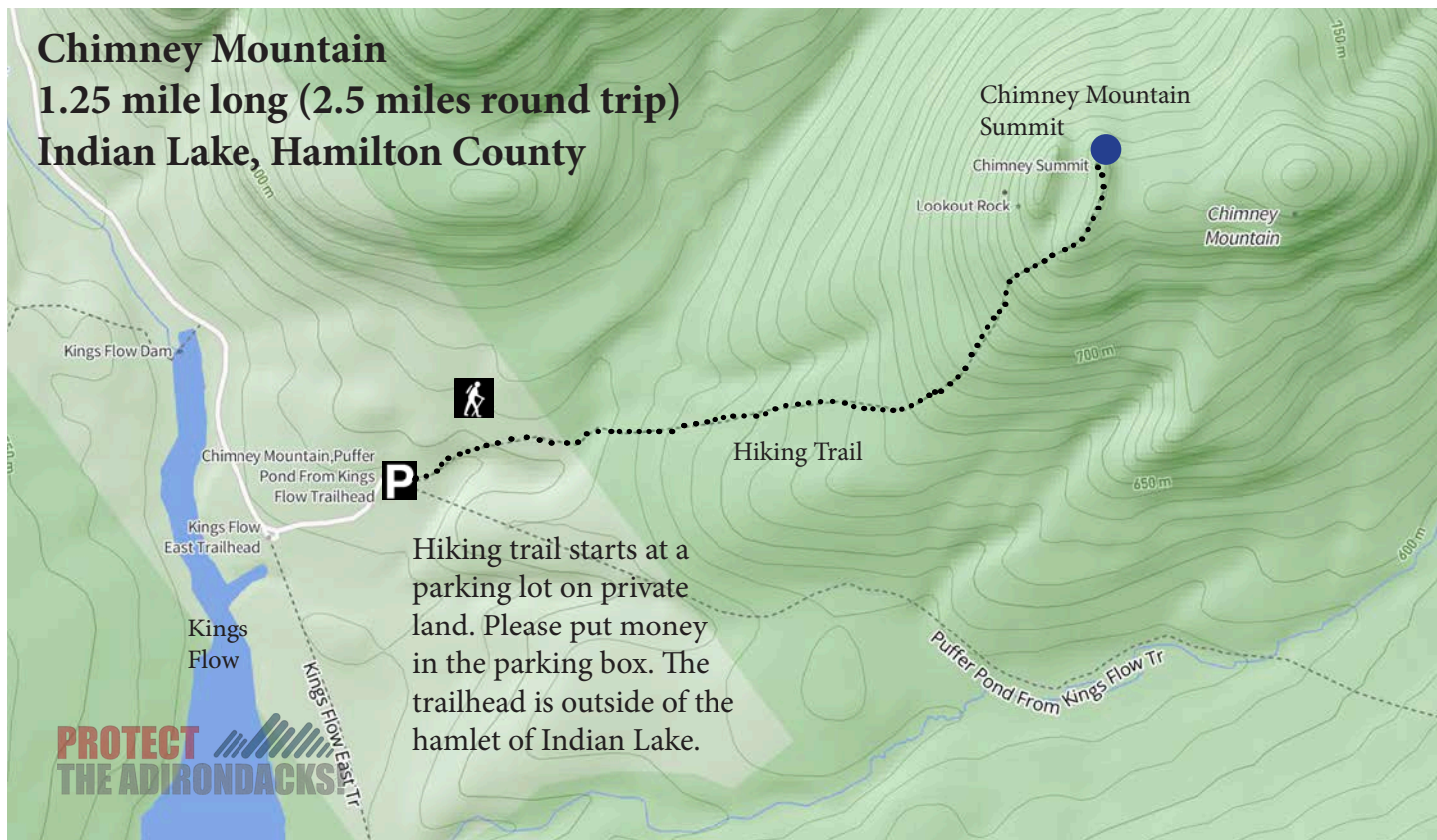


Chimney Mountain

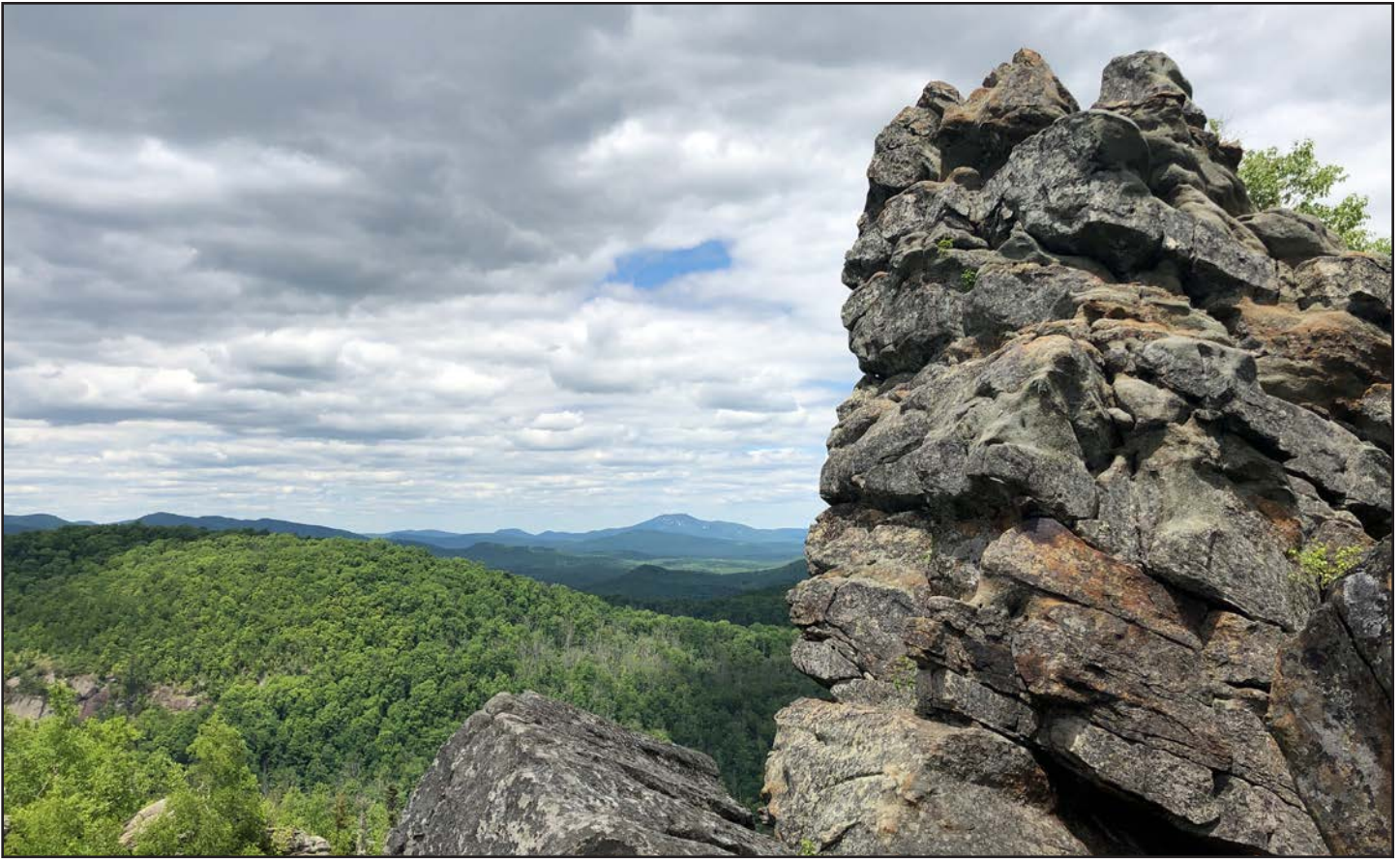


Chimney Mountain is a 1.25-mile hike in the central Adirondacks, southeast of downtown Indian Lake. The parking area and trailhead are on private property (please contribute with a few dollars for parking in the box in the parking lot), but the entire trail is on public Forest Preserve in the Siamese Ponds Wilderness Area. The trailhead parking lot is off of Big Brook Road (Hamilton County Route 4), picked up from Route 30, south of Indian Lake, or via Parkerville Road, west of Route 28.

Though the hike is short, just over a mile each way, it is as steep as any Adirondack mountain. The summit is particularly interesting due to natural stone structures creating small peaks and fissures, the most prominent being the “chimney” for which the mountain is named. The area is also popular with spelunkers for caving.

The trail begins by crossing an open grass meadow east of the parking lot. The trailhead register and kiosk stand on the edge of the forest, also the Forest Preserve boundary. The trailhead also includes the trail to Puffer Pond, Hour Pond, and Thirteenth Lake. Make sure to sign the trail register.

The hike winds through a mature hardwood forest for the entirety of the hike, slowly transitioning from the low-



land maple and beech-heavy forest to a grassy and beautiful oak-maple-ash forest at higher elevations. White and yellow birch are scattered throughout. The trail is eroded at some points early in the hike, with bedrock becoming more frequent as the incline and elevation increase. The trail is well worn, well-marked, and easy to follow.

Soon after starting the hike, the trail crosses a large stream. This is the only stream crossing of the hike. From there, the trail climbs gradually until bedrock begins to appear. At this point, the trail becomes steep, remaining this way until it levels off just before the summit. There is a small downhill directly before the summit. At the base of this downhill is a trail junction where a right turn leads to a campsite and a left turn leads to the summit of Chimney Mountain.

The Chimney Mountain summit is particularly interesting among Adirondack peaks. The view is excellent, with Blue Mountain visible to the northwest and the second, lower summit of Chimney visible directly to the west.

The geological formations of the summit are what make Chimney Mountain unique. The near-constant erosion this mountain has endured has worn away the softer material leaving the remaining stone pockmarked and concave in places. A major glacial rift has separated the two peaks of Chimney Mountain.

Cold and welcome updrafts will greet hikers who venture into this rift from the ground beneath them. However, due to the inherent danger, exploration of the caves on Chimney Mountain should only be undertaken with the proper equipment and experienced guides.

The hike back out is the same as the hike in.

Help Protect the Forest Preserve and Be Prepared When You Hike: Please follow “carry in, carry out” rules for all trash and follow other **Leave No Trace** principles when hiking in the public Forest Preserve and other wild areas. The seven Leave No Trace principles are: 1) Plan ahead and prepare; 2) Stay on hiking trails and camp at designated areas; 3) Dispose of human waste and trash properly; 4) Leave what you find; 5) Minimize campfires; 6) Respect wildlife; 7) Respect other hikers. **Educated and prepared hikers do not damage the environment or need search and rescue unless injured.**