

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
 Division of Lands and Forests

State Land/Easement Project Work Plan
 for
 Construction of New Facilities and Expansion or
 Modification of Existing Facilities

Fiscal Year 2019

Project # 2019-RB-022

<u>Region/Facility</u>	<u>Project Title</u>		
5	Road Reclamation and Rewilding Project		
<u>Project Location</u>	<u>Town(s)</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Management Unit</u>
	North Hudson and Newcomb	Essex	High Peaks Wilderness Complex

Description & Justification:

This project extends along portions of the main logging road system on the former TNC lands that were recently added to the HPWC. Work will be completed on the Boreas and MacIntyre Tracts. Following the removal of the former lease camps, work will be completed to remove culverts, bridges and reclaim the road surface, on grades. This project will improve the recovery of the natural resources and enhance the Wilderness Experience of future users.

Work would start in the Fall of 2019 on the Boreas Tract removing 2 bridges and the main culvert at the head of Boreas Ponds. Machinery will be used to dig out upland culverts and disturb the road surface to allow vegetation to take hold and mitigate erosion along the running length of the old roadways. Both bridges will be removed from their abutments without accessing the water and the bridges and culverts removed from the Forest Preserve.

Work on MacIntyre East and West Tracts would follow work on the Boreas Tract, with some of the work continuing in the spring of 2020. MacIntyre East Tract has a primitive area (for retained access of a private landowner) and there will be a gate installed on the north side of the brook (and bridge) at the boundary of the Forest Preserve. No culverts or bridges will be removed along the primitive area. Work will begin after the primitive area, removing 4 bridges and culverts.

On MacIntyre West there are 2 main access points that will be reclaimed, along with 4 bridges and culverts to be removed.

The intent of the work is to remove the larger infrastructure of the road system, hasten naturalization and support a future trail system. By removing the bridges and allowing the road system to start the recovery process, we provide a blank slate for the future of trail development. By designing the trail system from the start, to be a hiking trail system and not relying on using old roads, the Department is situating itself to create a sustainable trail system that blends with the forested surroundings and enhances the hiker's overall trail experience.

The William C Whitney Wilderness, Pharaoh Lake Wilderness, Round Lake Wilderness (and others) all have remnants of old road systems that were left. Areas in the High Peaks like the Cold River Horse Trails, trails from the Upper Works and the Marcy Dam truck trail all have old

culverts and bridges that continue to be a management challenge.

Alternatives were not considered because this is the first time we are in a position to help erase some of the man's impact to the Wilderness and set ourselves up for success in both having a truly world class purpose built trail system and improved Wilderness Experience of our users.

On some old roads, which were adopted as trails we have had to remove culverts from crossings when they became damaged or washed out. Though it varies it takes about crew week worth of trail crew resources to deal with removing a culvert and rehabbing the trail crossing. In only a few instances when the culvert was 1 mile or less from the road was it removed from the woods. The Moose Pond Horse Trail, Marcy Dam Trail and others have many old culverts that have been removed or damaged that are sitting in the woods along the trails. In some cases, we have rebuilt large road bridges on trails, because they were there, which required much more material and manpower than if it were just a hiking trail bridge.

Using 1 excavator and 1-2 trucks will allow a team of 2-4 workers to accomplish all of this work in 4-8 weeks compared to 100s of weeks of crew time to do this by hand and not counting flying materials out via helicopter at over 300 flights.

Materials and Dimensions:

Cutoff Wheels for Demo Saw	\$1,000
Fuel for Machines	Variable

Trees to be Removed:

NONE

Mitigation of Environmental Impacts:

Reclamation work on the road surface, on grades will mimic BMPs used in closing or naturalizing woods roads.

No machinery will be in streams.

Impacts to Wetlands:

It is not the intent of this project to remove elevated sections of roadway within wetlands. These sections of road will have pockets scraped in the gravel surface to allow vegetation to take a foothold.

Impacts to Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species:

No work will be done outside the established road system

Description of Use of Motorized Equipment or Motor Vehicle, if any:

An Excavator, front loader, truck or UTV and trailer will be used on this project.

Other Relevant Considerations

A benefit of this project is the restriction of illegal ATV access into the Wilderness. While appropriate signage, gates and rocks will be installed at the border, by removing the bridges and allowing the road surface to revegetate, the access will be limited, if users get beyond the boundary structures.

This project and proposed process seeks to reduce and eliminate future aircraft access in this area of

the HPWC, for the related structure removal. If this request is denied, a plan to remove the structures via aircraft will be spread-out over years/decades. As estimated above there would be upwards of 300 flights which would be scheduled each year in the spring and fall to accomplish this objective. Given the delay in non-motorized removal of all the structures this would be extended for decades as DEC chipped away at the removal process. Extending this process over years and decades will negatively impact overall wilderness recovery and wilderness experience of users, as well as multiplying the cost and staff time associated with this.

Prepared by (name/title):

Name: Tate Connor
Title: Forester 1
Phone: 518-897-1283

Date:

10/1/2019

Approval:

Comments:

Regional Forester
Date:

Regional Supervisor of Natural Resources
Date:

Regional Director
Date:

Division Director
Date:

Enter any additional supporting material, photos, maps or other attachments here.

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	2018 High Peaks Wilderness Complex UMP Amendment
	Tree Cutting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	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	CP-17 #1054 HPW Culvert and Bridge Removal
	Commissioner (aircraft, motorized equipment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Flight Request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	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"/>		