

Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire
BRCF Management Committee Meeting

April 13, 2021

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Zoom Video Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81624695954>

Meeting ID: 816 2469 5954

Passcode: 544548

- 1) Welcome (5 min)
- 2) Approval of December 1, 2020 minutes (5 min)
- 3) Updates (30 min)
 - a) Conservation Easement Use Limitations
 - b) Powder Mill Snowmobile Club
 - c) BRCF expansion (Stell & Young)
 - d) Recent workshops (SELT/MMRG)
- 4) Planned work for 2021 (45 min)
 - i. Review of planned work for 2020-2022 (*see enclosed memo*)
 - ii. Final 2021 budget (*see enclosed memo*)
 - iii. Forestry/Wildlife habitat management (*see enclosed memo*)
 - iv. Trails
 - v. Start update of management plan for Stell & Young (forestry/wildlife & recreation)
- 5) Events (10 min)
 - a) Public events planned for 2021
 - b) Management Committee field trips
- 6) Subcommittees (20 min)
 - a) Trails
 - b) Education
- 7) BRCF Management Committee meeting schedule
- 8) Other business (5 min)
- 9) Next meeting early September 2021 – to be scheduled & hopefully in person!

DRAFT

Birch Ridge Community Forest Management Committee – 1st Meeting

1 Dec 2020 6:00 pm Zoom video

Present: Debbie Goard (SELT), Parker Shuermann (SELT), Charlie Bridges, Russ Weldon, Victor Piekarski, Matt Murphy, Lorrie Drake, Emma Tutein, Mike Gelinias, Brad Helfer, Dennis Thorell, Lee Alexander, Ronda Fernald

1. Welcome & Introductions

Charlie welcomed participants (13 in total). Previously, he e-mailed brief bios of the Mgmt Comm members (attached). Debbie, Parker and Charlie used a power point Presentation during the meeting.

2. Review of the role of the Committee

Debbie provided a brief background of Steering Comm, and how it transitioned into the Mgmt Comm. Charlie mentioned the creation of the Mgmt Plan and what it contains. Lee suggested that the Mgmt Plan be updated annually. Debbie and Parker explained that an “adaptive management” approach will be used. Debbie and Charlie pointed out that the Management Plan will be reviewed and updated every 2-3 years, but long-range goals are unlikely to change. The Work Plan will be reviewed annually.

Lee also asked about annual work plan priorities and how flexible it is for changes as new opportunities come up. Matt pointed out that there may be some obstacles and opportunities that were not planned. Debbie responded that the fall meeting of the Mgt. Comm. will generally be focused on setting work priorities and budget, while the spring meeting will be used to plan specific activities, which should permit flexibility in this regard. Matt suggested a “post-mortem” discussion of completed projects would also be useful.

3. Updates

a) BRCF expansion (Stell & Young tracts) – Debbie summarized what has occurred. She mentioned that both trail recon (Lew Shelley) and forest management inventory (Jon Martin) are being done. Charlie also explained that the Mgmt Plan will need to include these two additional tracts after the closing, which should be in April 2021.

b) SELT management activities in 2020

i. Gates – Russ and Mike helped install. Their help is much appreciated.

ii. Kiosks – Built as an Eagle Scout project. Russ and Mike assisted. Temporary trail maps will be posted on the kiosks (and on the SELT website and Trailfinder, per Emma, when available). The maps will be updated as trail work is completed.

iii. Trails – Parker described what occurred this past summer/fall on the Mt. Eleanor and Rattlesnake Mtn trails. An attempt was made to locate the Mt. Eleanor trail in uncut areas along with views. Plans are to make the Rattlesnake trail suitable for mtn bikes, including a loop and connector to Corridor 22, and perhaps a shorter loop back to the parking area. Russ suggested that Mtn Bike Associations be contacted for their input and involvement with trail maintenance. Parker mentioned his past involvement with NEMBA (New England Mtn Bike Assoc.) in Maine.

iv. Parking lots – Parker thanked Mike and Russ for the tremendous amount of work that was accomplished to create the two parking lots. Three kiosks have been built and erected as an eagle scout project. Gates have been installed at access points.

v. Old field habitat restoration by cabin – Parker described the project restoring the viewshed and old field habitat (8 acres of bronto work by Jon Martin cost \$9,200). Lee mentioned that this type of bronto clearing activity would be beneficial on other sites. Parker noted whip-poor-wills nesting here.

vi. ARM bridges – Jon Martin has installed three bridges as was required for the ARM funding for the project. Mike and Russ were pleased with the design and installation (pre-cast concrete blocks). Charlie mentioned that he and Lee met with “Cheryl” from the DES ARM program about an additional funding opportunity for stream crossing “restoration” work. Last week Charlie, Lee, Mike and Russ visited a potential ARM crossing site on the stream below the beaver pond that needs to be restored to gain access to the Early Successional Forest Wildlife Habitat Management area.

vii. Birch Hill Road – Parker mentioned that Steve Edwards is happy with the road grading that Russ accomplished. Charlie explained that this is a public way Class VI road. He also mentioned that the new parking lot should be used as the main parking area rather than the emergency vehicle turn-around site at the end of the road. Parker noted the fire department and Conservation Officer have access through locked gates.

c) Snowmobile Club – Mike reported the trail improvement work that he and Russ performed on the Stell & Young tracts this past summer (culverts and water bars). Charlie noted that a MOU between PMSC and SELT is needed to specify what trail work is routine maintenance and what needs approval. Parker advised that he is working on a draft for review. Discussion of winter parking on Brienne Road and near the town beach.

4. MMRG – conservation easement monitoring

Charlie suggested that Mgmt Comm members become familiar with the permitted uses and land use limitations contained in the Conservation Easement. It applies only to the main part of BRCF and not the Stell & Young tracts. An easement monitoring site walk has been scheduled for Sunday 12/6/20, with a priority of examining the BRCF property boundaries on the South Shore Rd. Committee members are invited to attend. (POC: is Ron Gale, MMRG & New Durham Conserv Comm). Volunteer land stewards are Jim Matthews and Adam Buehne. (The 12/6/20 site walk was postponed due to a winter storm)

5. Review of the next 2-3 years management activities from Management Plan (10 min)

Parker summarized what is planned during 2021 – 2023 (see PP slide). Russ suggested that the 20ft wide ‘spaghetti parcels’ that reach to South Shore Rd be evaluated as potential access sites. There are 17 of them. Debbie explained what needs to be determined for suitable entry/access locations along South Shore Rd. Parker added that he is looking for the best 1 or 2 locations for access without parking.

Parker explained about the locks installed on the various gates and who has access (New Durham Fire Dept., NHF&G Conservation Officer, etc.).

Mike will be looking into an alternative route for a Camp Pride access trail to BRCF. He also asked about opportunities to pursue additional grants for some of the trail work.

6. Presentation and discussion of 2021 budget

Debbie briefly reviewed the current draft budget -- which is a work in progress. Lee asked about the \$30K that is listed for additional parking/grading/earthwork on existing access/woods roads. Debbie explained that this funding would likely come from NRCS grant funding, and if NRCS provides a grant the roads need to be constructed to their specifications .

7. Presentation and discussion of EQIP contract with NRCS

Parker summarized a draft plan/application of what could be performed in 2021 – 2023 (see PP slide). Includes TSI, early successional habitat, and blueberry barren restoration.

8. Discussion on thoughts for programming for 2021

a) Potential for in-person – perhaps 4-6 outreach activities per year. POC for outreach activities at SELT is Zoe Aldag. Emma mentioned three snow tracking events tentatively planned for this winter. One could be at BRCF. Charlie asked that Zoe provide the Mgmt Comm a draft list of planned activities. Kari Lygren, MMRG outreach coordinator, and/or New Durham Rec Dept may be able to be brought in on program planning.

b) Virtual – Debbie explained what could possibly be prepared. Virtual events and tours worked well this year on some other SELT properties. Matt mentioned that he has done some “You-tube” videos (e.g., a snowmobile run thru BRCF)

c) Matt & Mike mentioned snowmobile ride into the cabin in February, conditions permitting.

9. Discussion/determination of best way to get info to Mgmt Comm members

Debbie explained that she could create an electronic folder that could be accessed by Mgmt Comm members. Charlie feels that this is a good approach that worked well in the past. Lee asked that tonight's power point presentation be available in the folder

10. Other business (5 min)

a) Publication of BRCF Trail Map by SELT – Debbie explained about the current status of a BRCF trail map for existing trails and future trails. It should be available on SELT website in January 2021.

b) Trash/garbage cans – Russ asked about what is planned? Debbie explained that perhaps one could be located at Cabin site. Russ also asked about porta-potties. Debbie has been considering this at the cabin, but it is still to be determined.

c) Dog policy – Russ also asked about dogs. Debbie explained that dogs must be on leash or under effective voice control.

d) Charlie was formally elected (unanimous vote) as Chair of the Mgmt Comm.

11. Next meeting March 2021 – could be scheduled sometime in February. A doodle poll will be sent out by SELT.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Management Committee members (from Charlie's e-mail)

New Durham Resident: Russ Weldon

Russ owns Merrymeeting Marina. He represented MMLA in the agreement with the prior landowner to purchase the BRCF, and raised the funds to secure the agreement. Russ has committed countless hours of both his time and his equipment improving woods roads and constructing parking areas at BRCF.

New Durham Conservation Commission: Victor Piekarski

Victor is the owner of Widowmaker Farm on Meaderboro Rd in New Durham. He and Gloria, his wife, donated a conservation easement on their property to Moose Mtns Regional Greenway. His well-managed ownership has a large beaver pond, extensive wetlands, and outstanding woods roads. It is open to pedestrian use.

Merrymeeting Lake Assn: Matt Murphy

Matt served on the BRCF SC. He has a summer cottage and winter home along South Shore Rd abutting the BRCF. He has extensive knowledge of the BRCF and a long history of recreating on the property.

Moose Mountain Regional Greenway: Lorrie Drake

Lorrie served on the BRCF SC. She lives in New Durham and is a retired teacher (Coe-Brown Academy). Lorrie serves on the Moose Mountains Regional Greenway Board of Directors.

Southeast Land Trust: Emma Tutein

Emma serves on the SELT Land Stewardship Committee. Emma works for UNH Extension as the Land Conservation Specialist, and was formerly an Extension wildlife program specialist.

Powder Mill Snowmobile Club: Mike Gelinas

Mike is a life-long resident of New Durham and served on the BRCF SC. He has a long history with the BRCF, including playing and working on the property during his younger years. His involvement has continued in recent decades as the trail master for the Powder Mill Snowmobile Club. Along with Russ, he has devoted countless hours to trail maintenance, mowing and other activities on the BRCF.

Hunting & Fishing: Charlie Bridges

Charlie chaired the BRCF SC, and lives in New Durham on the other side of Rte 11. He retired from NH Fish & Game after working as a biologist and program administrator in the Wildlife Division.

Non-Motorized Recreation: Brad Helfer

Brad served on the BRCF SC. He lives in New Durham and is an attorney with a law office in Wolfeboro. He is an avid mountain biker and brings that expertise to the MC.

Forestry: Dennis Thorell

Dennis lives on South Shore Rd and is an abutter to the BRCF. He is a professional forester, is retired, and has held forestry positions in both the private and public sectors.

Wildlife Interests/Habitat: Lee Alexander

Lee served on the SC. His family has a lake house on North Shore Rd, and he resides in Durham. He is a retired research professor at the UNH Center for Coastal and Ocean Mapping. He is an experienced wildlife biologist and habitat manager.

K-12 Education: Ronda Fernald

Ronda lives in Alton and is a special education teacher at Prospect Mountain high School. She is also the faculty coordinator of the Prospect Mountain Outing Club.

SELT Staff:

Debbie Goard, Stewardship Director
Parker Schuerman, Land Manager

MEMORANDUM

To: BRCF Management Committee
From: Deborah Goard, SELT Stewardship Director
Date: April 9, 2021
Re: Status of 2020-2022 Work Accomplished and Work Planned

Prior to the transition to the BRCF Management Committee, the BRCF Steering Committee laid out a plan of work that covered 2020 through 2022. This was also discussed by the BRCF Management Committee at the December 2020 meeting. This memo will review each item listed in the three-year plan and provide an update as to whether planned activities have been completed, are in process or have not yet been started. Please note the plans do not include any work on the Stell & Young addition which will be discussed separately. The map that follows only shows the trail work noted below.

The following summary will not be presented during the meeting to allow for time for any questions or discussion needed.

2020

Management Plan

- Steering Committee Review: December 2019 & January 2020
- Public Session: February 2020
- Steering Committee Review of changes & recommendation for approval March/April 2020
- SELT Land Stewardship Committee approval April/May 2020
- Consult with archaeologists to determine any additional Phase 1B archaeological work needed based on management plan

Update: The Steering Committee reviewed the management plan and a public input session occurred in July of 2020. This public input session was held virtually due to Covid-19. The Steering Committee then recommended the Management Plan for approval at their August meeting with SELT's Land Stewardship Committee review and SELT's Board of Directors approval occurring in August of 2020 as well.

SELT also consulted with IAC, the archaeological consultants, regarding the need for a Phase 1B survey on a portion of the trail system planned for 2020. The Phase 1B survey was done in the fall with approval from the NH Department of Historic Resources giving their approval for the trail occurring in fall of 2020 as well.

Trails

- Secure funding through NRCS to finish repair work on Corridor 22 and Lake Trail
- Conduct work on Corridor 22 and Lake Trail
- ARM restoration – install 3 bridges required
- Install Mount Eleanor Trail / Rattlesnake Trail
- Begin research/hire consultant for accessible trail

Update: SELT applied for some funds through the EQIP and CSP programs with NRCS in February of 2021 which included some repairs to Corridor 22. The applications are being reviewed and we hope to

hear soon as to whether or not we received funding. Some minor repair and maintenance was done by the snowmobile club in 2020.

The three bridges required for the ARM restoration were installed in 2020.

Lew Shelly, the trails consultant being used for BRCF led the effort for the installation of new trails. He led a volunteer training to construct the Mt. Eleanor trails and finished the work along with SELT staff and some UNH interns. He also worked with Russ and Mike to begin the construction of the trail from the parking lot on Merrymeeting Road until work needed to stop due to the need for the Phase 1B survey. Lew also made progress roughing out the hiking/mt. bike trail to the top of Rattlesnake Mountain before the field season ended. In addition to the Mt. Eleanor Trail and the Rattlesnake Mountain trail, Lew also worked on a location for an accessible trail from the parking lot on Birch Hill Road. Lew is now working on costs for installation of the accessible trail.

Public access

- Get any permits needed for driveways/parking lots: winter 2019/2020
- Install two parking lots for approx. 12 cars each
- Install kiosks with temporary maps in parking lots
- Install gates / block access where needed
- Finish boundary marking (SELT boundary signs, public use signs, etc.)

Update: Both parking lots were installed in 2020. Kiosks and gates were also installed along with a BRCF sign at the Merrymeeting Road parking lot. Some signage still needs to be put up on the boundary line. Temporary maps have been made and will be up soon, likely on April 16th.

Forest / Wildlife Management

- Secure funding through NRCS for early successional ----- habitat and/or timber stand improvement

Update: SELT applied for some funds through the EQIP and CSP programs with NRCS in February of 2021 which included forest management and wildlife habitat work. The applications are being reviewed and we hope to hear soon as to whether or not we received funding.

2021

Trails

- Finish work on Corridor 22 and Lake Trail if needed
- Birch Ridge loop
- Work to locate access trail(s) from South Shore Road
- Update maps in kiosks as needed
- Begin trail junction sign process

Update: Trail work for 2021 includes work needed on Corridor 22 and the Lake Trail. This will likely be done through a combination of the snowmobile club as well as any funds we receive through the NRCS applications. Lew Shelly will continue to be engaged with the hiking/mt. bike trail on Birch Ridge to be worked on in a similar manner to the Mt. Eleanor trail through a volunteer training on trail installation. This will likely be planned for the fall in order to finish the trail work to connect the Rattlesnake trail to

the Lake Trail as well as to finish the trail up and over Rattlesnake Mountain.

The work to locate a trail(s) from South Shore Road is also on track to occur in 2021.

The trail maps will be updated in the kiosks after the trail work is finished for the year. As the hope is the majority of the core trail work will be done in terms of the trails originally planned for, we should also be able to start work for trail junction signs, if not this fall, then over the winter.

Forest / Wildlife Management

- Implement early successional habitat management
- Timber stand improvement

Update: Work for forest and wildlife management will be dependent on when we hear from NRCS in terms of funding received. Once we know that we will be able to plan that work for 2021.

2022

Trails

- Evaluate and engage equestrian community for appropriate trails for equestrian use
- Install trail junction signs
- Finalize trail guide and maps

Update: While the Steering Committee determined 2022 to be the year to engage the equestrian community in order to determine trails appropriate for use by horses, this has already begun to occur through a recent meeting of trail user groups. This will continue to be discussed throughout 2021.

Trail sign installation as well as updating and/or finalizing a trail guide and maps is also still planned for 2022 but will be determined by the progress made on the trails.

Forest / Wildlife Management

- Implement early successional habitat management
- Timber stand improvement
- Begin work on fire management plan for community blueberry barrens

Update: Forest and wildlife management for 2022 will be better understood once we know what was funded through the NRCS application.



SELT

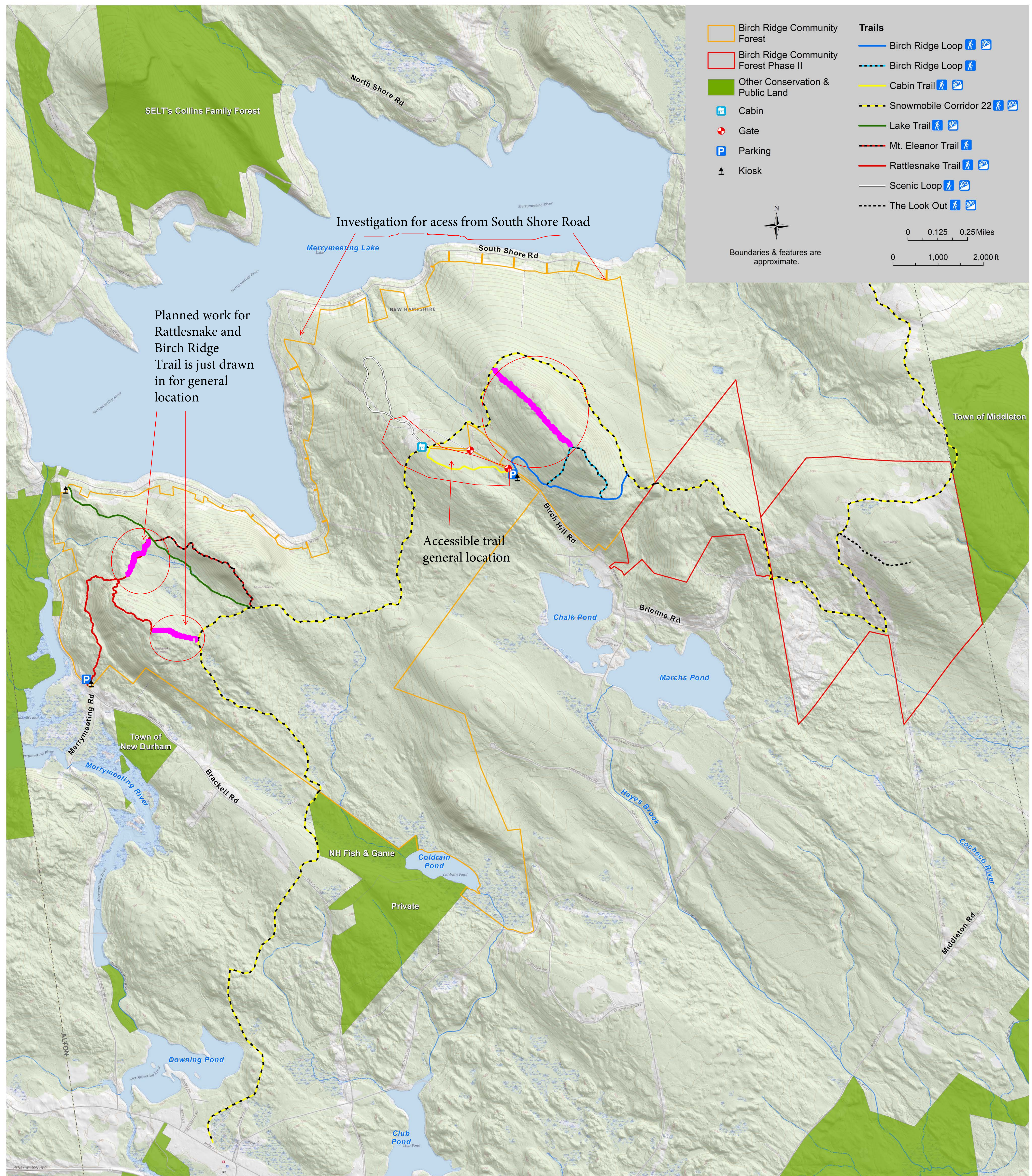
SOUTHEAST LAND TRUST
of NEW HAMPSHIRE

Birch Ridge Community Forest

New Durham, NH
2,000+ acres

- Please stay on marked trails. These routes were designed to avoid damage to soils and habitats.
- Wheeled motorized vehicles are prohibited.
- Please carry out what you carry in.
- Dogs must remain under the control of owners.
- Please carry a leash, leash aggressive dogs, and pick up after your pet.
- Hunting is allowed. Be aware of hunting seasons and wear orange.
- Please respect our neighbors' privacy.

Scan to learn more
about Birch Ridge!



MEMORANDUM

To: BRCF Management Committee
From: Deborah Goard, SELT Stewardship Director
Date: April 7, 2021
RE: Final 2021 budget for Birch Ridge Community Forest

Following this memo is the 2021 budget for the Birch Ridge Community Forest (BRCF). There are a few things to note as you read through this prior to our meeting.

- This budget includes both the original BRCF as well as anticipated work on the Stell & Young additions to the BRCF
- The amount in Net Operating Revenue – 8334 NRCS EQIP will change based on what is funded from our EQIP application
- Some amounts in Expenditures under Project Management and Wildlife & Forest Improvement will changed based on what is funded from our EQIP application
- The Net Revenue is negative which is based on our expenses for this property being greater than the revenue we are bringing in specific to this property through NRCS EQIP funds. The remaining expenditures are covered by
 - Short-term capital funds for the Stell & Young tracts
 - SELT's Land Management Funds

The budget is based on the planned activities discussed by the Management Committee at the December 2020 meeting and includes the following activities:

- Mowing of area surrounding the cabin
- Potential costs associated with Birch Hill Road
- Wildlife habitat and forest management work
- Potential costs related to wetlands permitting and archaeological surveys
- Trail work for Rattlesnake Mountain & Birch Ridge
- Work on Corridor 22 associated with any funding from NRCS
- Kiosks, gates and maps
- Stell & Young addition management planning (forestry, trails & wildlife habitat)

Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire

Budget Overview: 2021 - FY21 P&L Classes

January - December 2021

	LAND MANAGEMENT	BIRCH RIDGE COMMUNITY FOREST	TOTAL LAND MANAGEMENT	TOTAL
Revenue				
Total Revenue			\$0.00	\$0.00
GROSS PROFIT	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Expenditures				
5500 Maintenance				\$0.00
5532 Mowing & Brush Hogging		450.00	450.00	\$450.00
5538 Road Maintenance		3,000.00	3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Total 5500 Maintenance		3,450.00	3,450.00	\$3,450.00
Total Expenditures	\$0.00	\$3,450.00	\$3,450.00	\$3,450.00
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$0.00	\$ -3,450.00	\$ -3,450.00	\$ -3,450.00
Other Revenue				
8000 Special Projects Income				\$0.00
8200 Public Sources				\$0.00
8300 Federal Funding				\$0.00
8334 NRCS EQIP (Env Qual Incent Pro)		53,790.00	53,790.00	\$53,790.00
Total 8300 Federal Funding		53,790.00	53,790.00	\$53,790.00
Total 8200 Public Sources		53,790.00	53,790.00	\$53,790.00
Total 8000 Special Projects Income		53,790.00	53,790.00	\$53,790.00
Total Other Revenue	\$0.00	\$53,790.00	\$53,790.00	\$53,790.00
Other Expenditures				
9000 Special Projects Expenses				\$0.00
9400 Project Management				\$0.00
9410 Professional Services				\$0.00
9412 Archaeological Services		7,000.00	7,000.00	\$7,000.00
9413 Wetland Scientist		900.00	900.00	\$900.00
9414 Forester		13,500.00	13,500.00	\$13,500.00
9416 Trail Consultant		4,720.00	4,720.00	\$4,720.00
Total 9410 Professional Services		26,120.00	26,120.00	\$26,120.00
Total 9400 Project Management		26,120.00	26,120.00	\$26,120.00
9600 Stewardship				\$0.00
9610 Wildlife and Forest Improvement				\$0.00
9612 Timber Stand Improvement (TSI)		7,340.00	7,340.00	\$7,340.00
9618 Early Successional Habitat		14,000.00	14,000.00	\$14,000.00
Total 9610 Wildlife and Forest Improvement		21,340.00	21,340.00	\$21,340.00
9650 Trails and Public Access				\$0.00
9652 Parking, Grading and Earthwork		30,000.00	30,000.00	\$30,000.00
9654 Trail Construction		15,000.00	15,000.00	\$15,000.00
9658 Signs, Kiosk Panels		4,700.00	4,700.00	\$4,700.00
9659 Land Management Services		3,500.00	3,500.00	\$3,500.00
9660 Lumber and Hardware		7,000.00	7,000.00	\$7,000.00
9664 Gates & Bridges etc		7,800.00	7,800.00	\$7,800.00
9668 Other Miscellaneous		400.00	400.00	\$400.00
Total 9650 Trails and Public Access		68,400.00	68,400.00	\$68,400.00
Total 9600 Stewardship		89,740.00	89,740.00	\$89,740.00
Total 9000 Special Projects Expenses		115,860.00	115,860.00	\$115,860.00
Total Other Expenditures	\$0.00	\$115,860.00	\$115,860.00	\$115,860.00
NET OTHER REVENUE	\$0.00	\$ -62,070.00	\$ -62,070.00	\$ -62,070.00

Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire

Budget Overview: 2021 - FY21 P&L Classes

January - December 2021

	LAND MANAGEMENT	BIRCH RIDGE COMMUNITY FOREST	TOTAL LAND MANAGEMENT	TOTAL
NET REVENUE	\$0.00	\$ -65,520.00	\$ -65,520.00	\$ -65,520.00

2021 – 2023: SELT NRCS EQIP Application for BRCF MU-1
Organized by Year of Practice Application

Memorandum

From: T. Parker Schuerman

To: Birch Ridge Community Forest (BRCF) Management Committee

Subject: Summary of NRCS EQIP Application submitted in January 2021

Date: April 2021

To the Forest Management Committee:

With the assistance of our Forester, Jon Martin, and with consultation from Charlie Bridges, our wildlife biologist, the Southeast Land Trust requested EQUIP funding to focus on Actions Planned in Management Unit 1 (MU-1) at BRCF. These management actions would be applied in three phases in calendar years 2021-2023.

In summary, practices were chosen to create new habitats, improve the future resiliency and diversity of the future forest and to improve road and forestry trail management, maintenance, and access.

Specifically, the goals were as follows:

1. Manage and create early successional habitat which will support future fire management and maintain the view-shed along corridor 22.
2. Open the north side of Birch Ridge to create an oak savanna and recreate a blueberry barren underneath the forest canopy.
3. Conduct Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) work to manage tree diversity and release future trees for harvesting and habitat.
4. Erect nesting boxes for wood ducks and bluebirds.
5. Improve the network of woods roads and harvest trails to reduce erosion and maintain water quality along the road (corridor 22).

In general, the areas of these habitat and forest management applications are depicted in the below map. As of this writing, no awards or funds have been awarded from this application process.

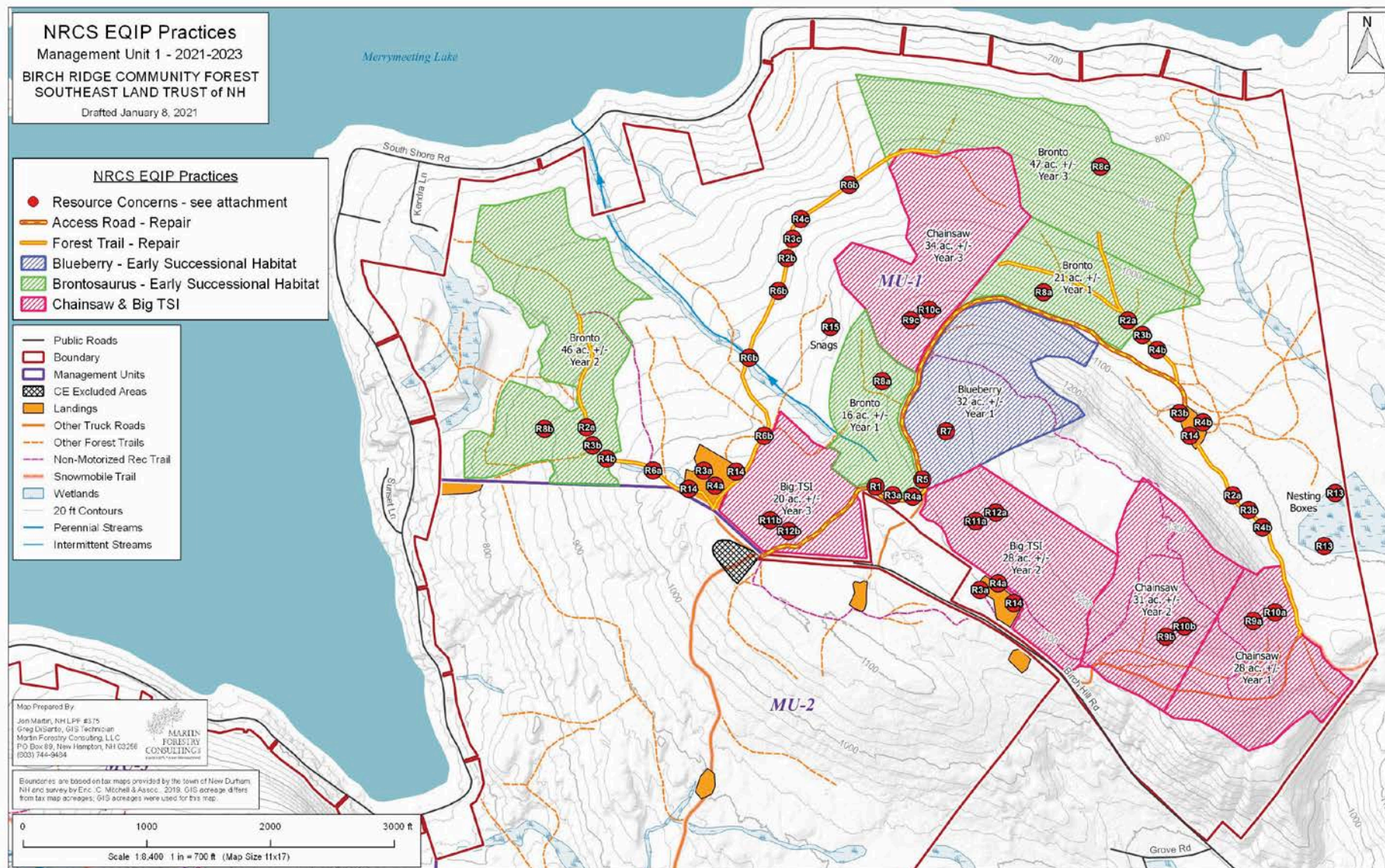


Figure 1: BRCF NRCS 2021-2023 EQIP MU-1

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