



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Fish Creek Pond Campground UMP

Proposed Final Unit Management Plan

May 14, 2021

Campground GEIS Overview (1990)

Generic UMP/GEIS is broken into three volumes.

Volume I- Generic EIS, contains overview, environmental setting, goals, policy and mgt. criteria universally common to all IUAs

Volume II- Site specific document containing biological, physical, and built infrastructure inventories along with site specific mgt. objectives for each IUA.

Volume III- Contains reference material and support data to Volumes I & II



Campground GEIS (1990)

Volume I- Management Objectives

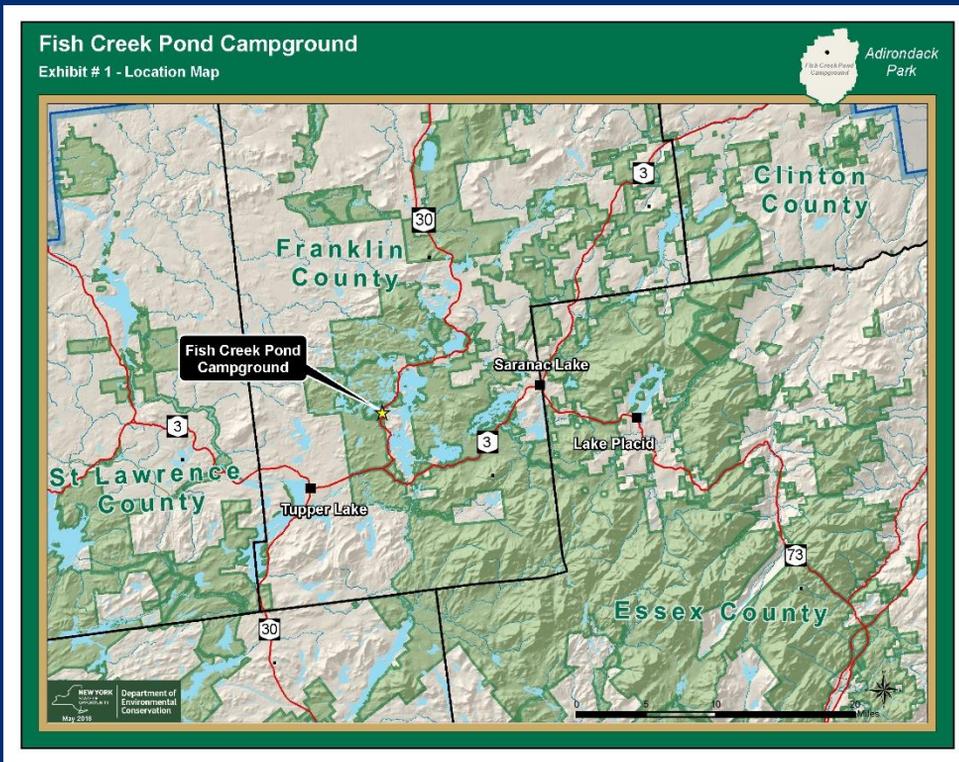
- Tree Cutting
- Facility & Site Rehabilitation & Reclamation
- Land Acquisition
- Water
- Sewage
- Trailer Dump Stations & Toilets
- Showers
- Accessibility
- Road & Parking
- Refuse
- Play & Sports
- Boat Launch & Fishing/Waterway Access Sites
- Firewood Buildings (2010) & EV Chargers (2019)



Campground Location Overview

Town of
Santa Clara
Franklin County

853 Acres



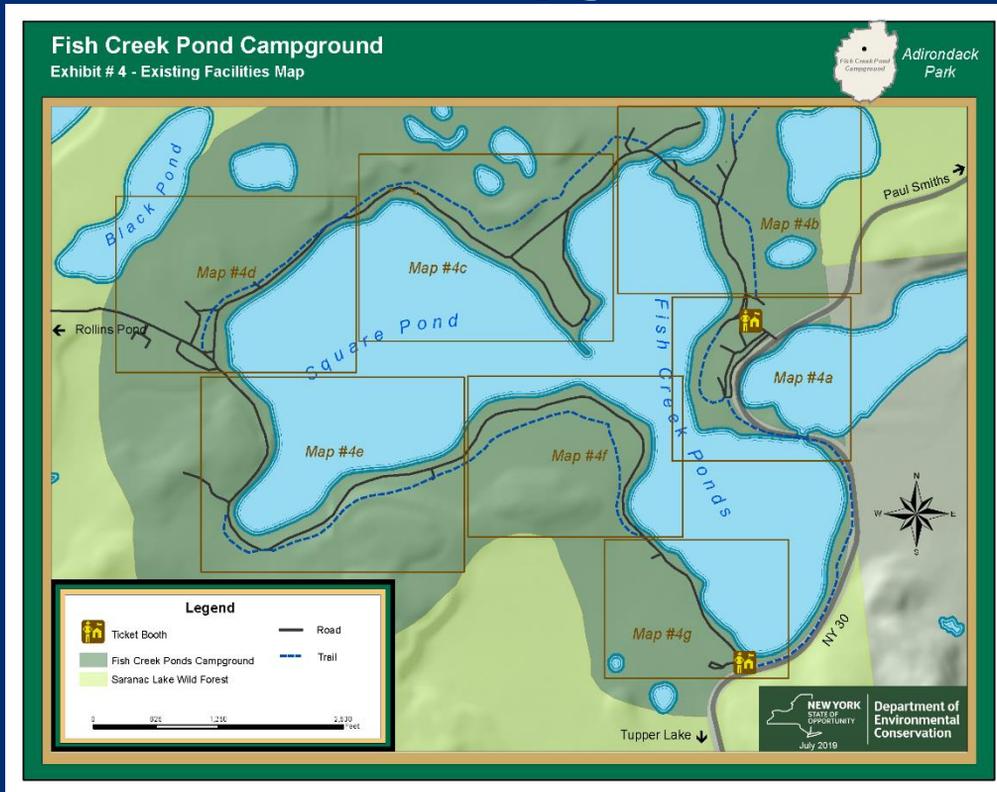
Fish Creek Pond Campground



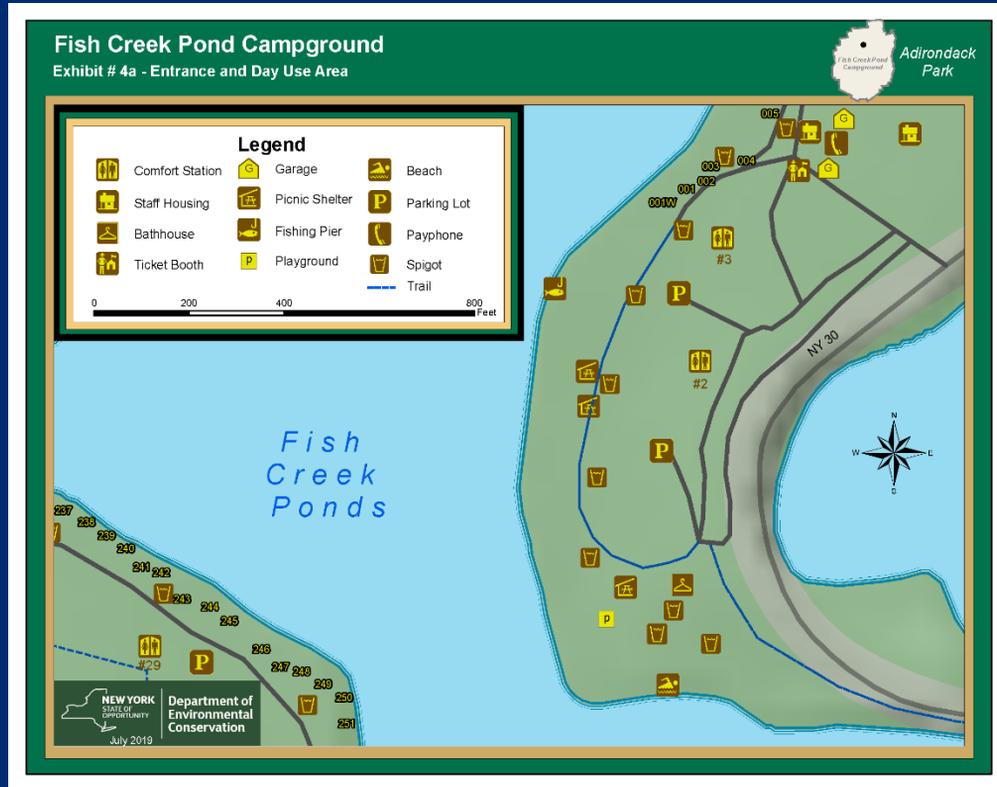
Fish Creek Pond Campground

- Town of Santa Clara, Franklin County
- 355 Campsites
- Campsite capacity: 2,130
- Day Use Area capacity 192
- Natural sand shoreline and water access for most campsites
- Close access to St. Regis Canoe Area

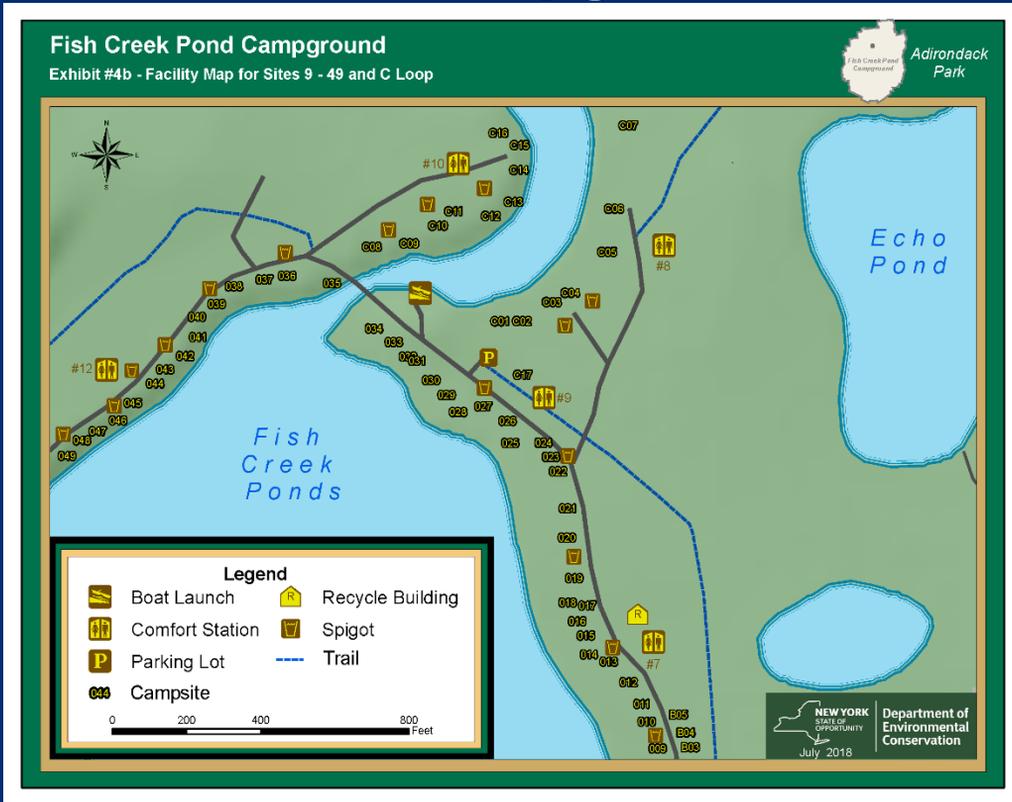
Fish Creek Pond Campground Facilities



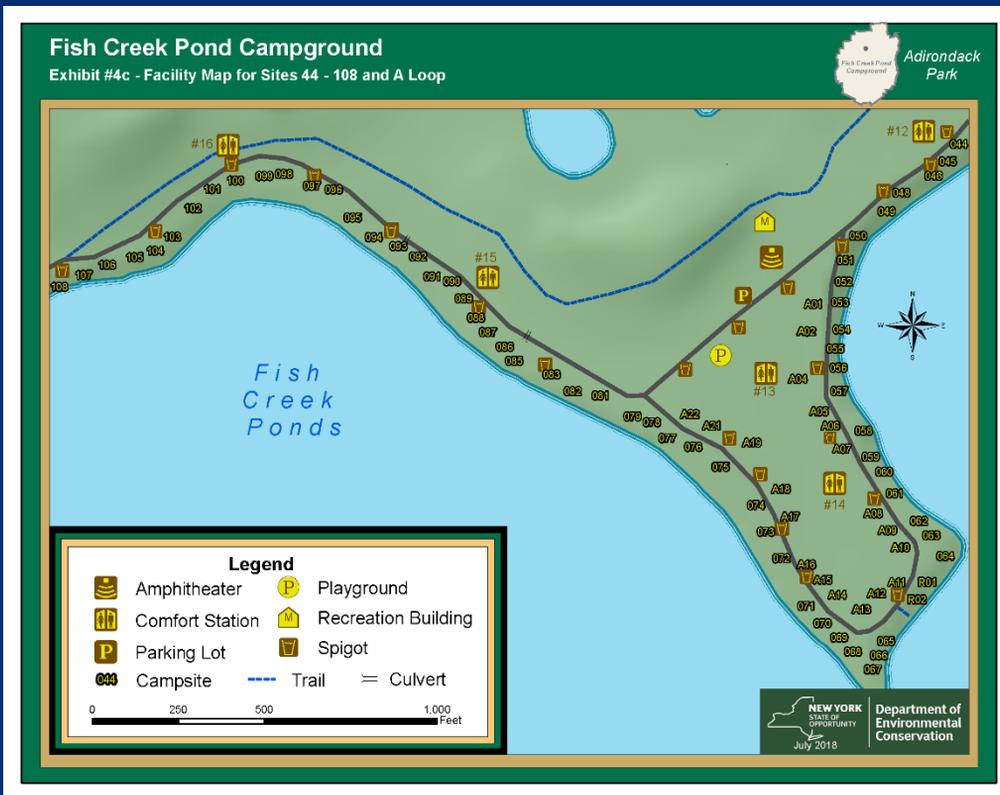
Fish Creek Pond Campground Facilities



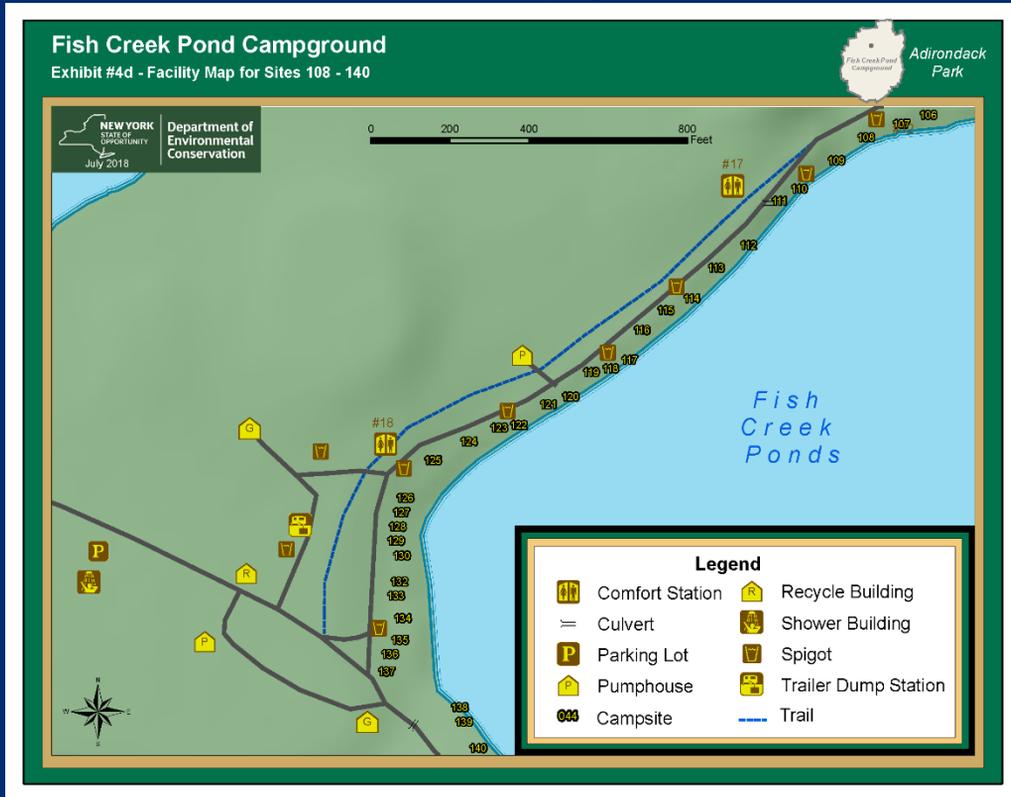
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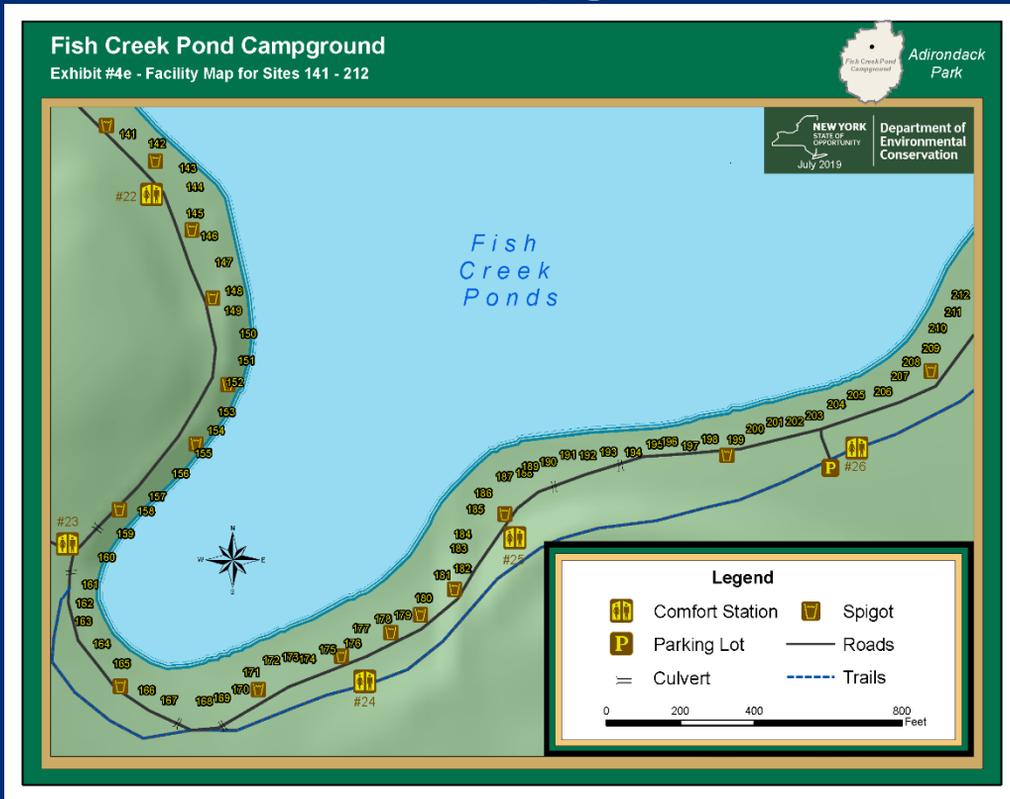
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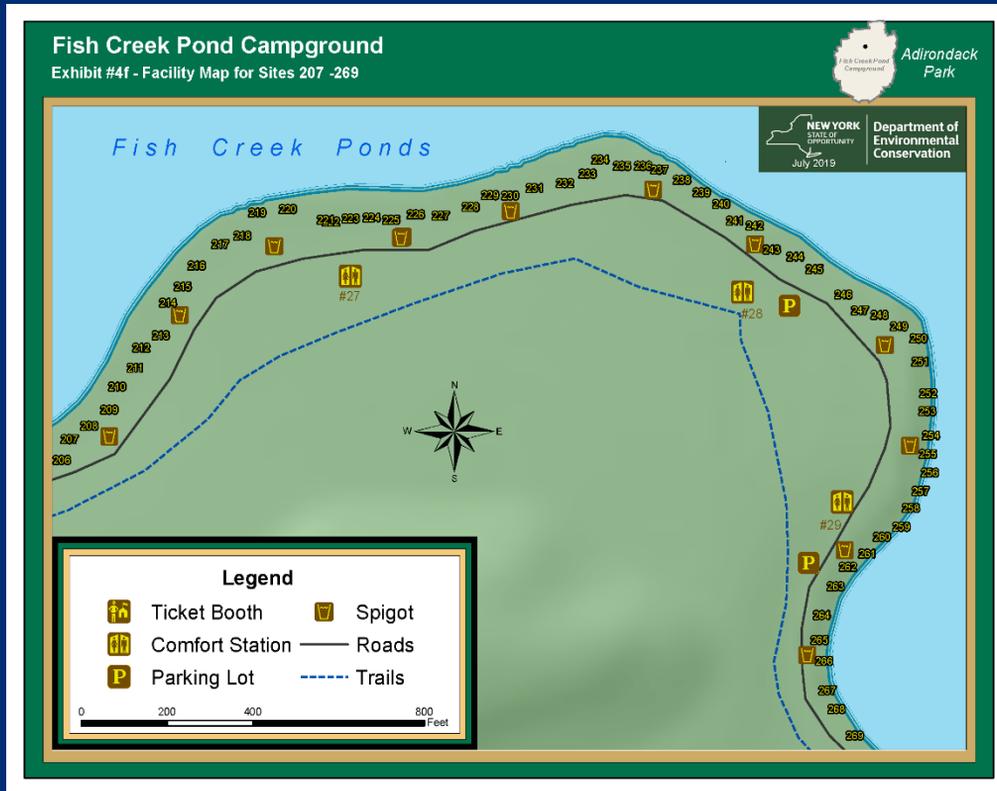
Fish Creek Pond Campground Facilities



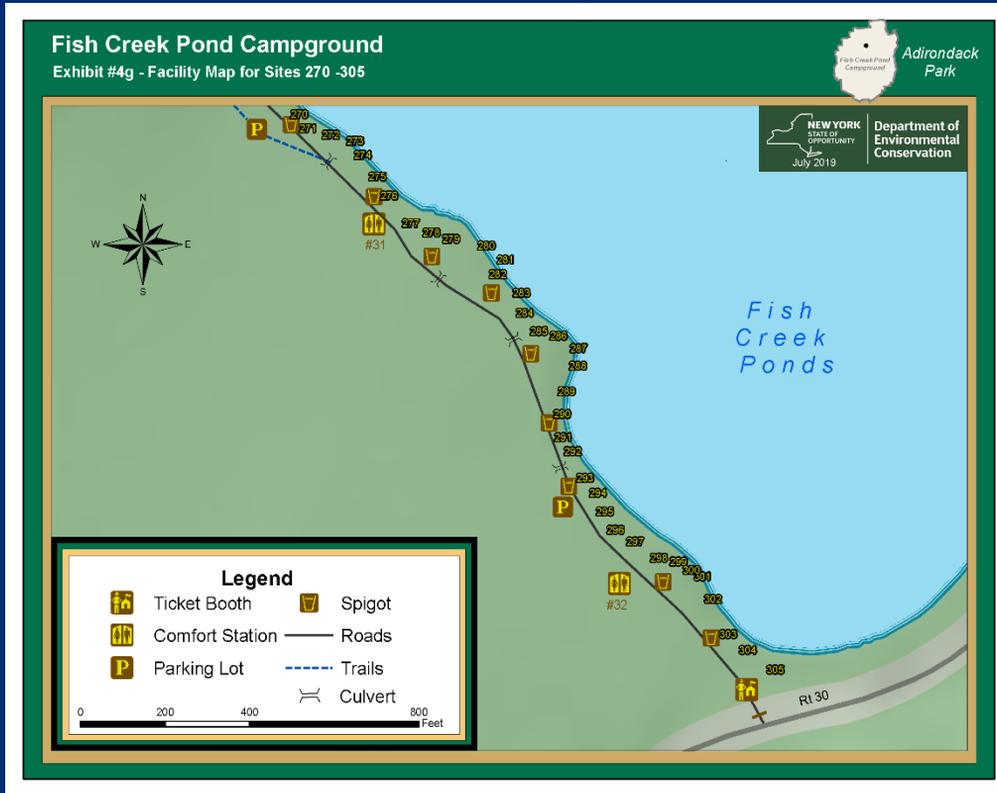
Fish Creek Pond Campground Facilities



Fish Creek Pond Campground Facilities



Fish Creek Pond Campground Facilities



Fish Creek Pond Attendance & Revenue

Five-Year Revenue Totals for Fish Creek Pond

Year	Camping	Day Use	Firewood	Empire Passports	Showers	Other	Total
2019	\$ 722,456	\$ 15,114	\$ 21,338			\$ 900	\$ 759,808
2018	\$ 726,217	\$ 14,580	\$ 11,771	\$ 1,280			\$ 754,598
2017	\$ 721,309	\$ 14,526	\$ 7,245	\$ 650		\$ 750	\$ 744,480
2016	\$ 714,917	\$ 16,258	\$ 6,435	\$ 1,105	\$ 5,857	\$ 900	\$ 745,472
2015	\$ 682,777	\$ 15,990	\$ 5,670	\$ 1,300	\$ 6,897	\$ 700	\$ 713,334
Avg	\$ 713,535	\$ 15,294	\$ 10,492	\$ 867	\$ 2,731	\$ 11,050	\$ 743,538

Fish Creek Pond Attendance

Year	Camping	Day Use	Total
2019	88,028	4,511	92,539
2018	90,858	4,370	95,228
2017	92,165	4,688	96,863
2016	92,667	5,053	97,719
2015	92,786	5,626	98,411
Avg	91,301	4,850	96,152



Fish Creek Pond Attendance & Revenue

- Overall site utilization rate 46%
Weekend 54%
Weekday 42 %
Range 0%-93%
July & August 88%
- Average Length of stay 4.5 nights
- Camper Satisfaction Rate of 87%
- Occupancy rate of 20%
(Actual occupancy x total sites rented)
- 80% NYS residents
- Most NYS campers from Capital District, N.Y.C. metro area, western New York and Plattsburgh area

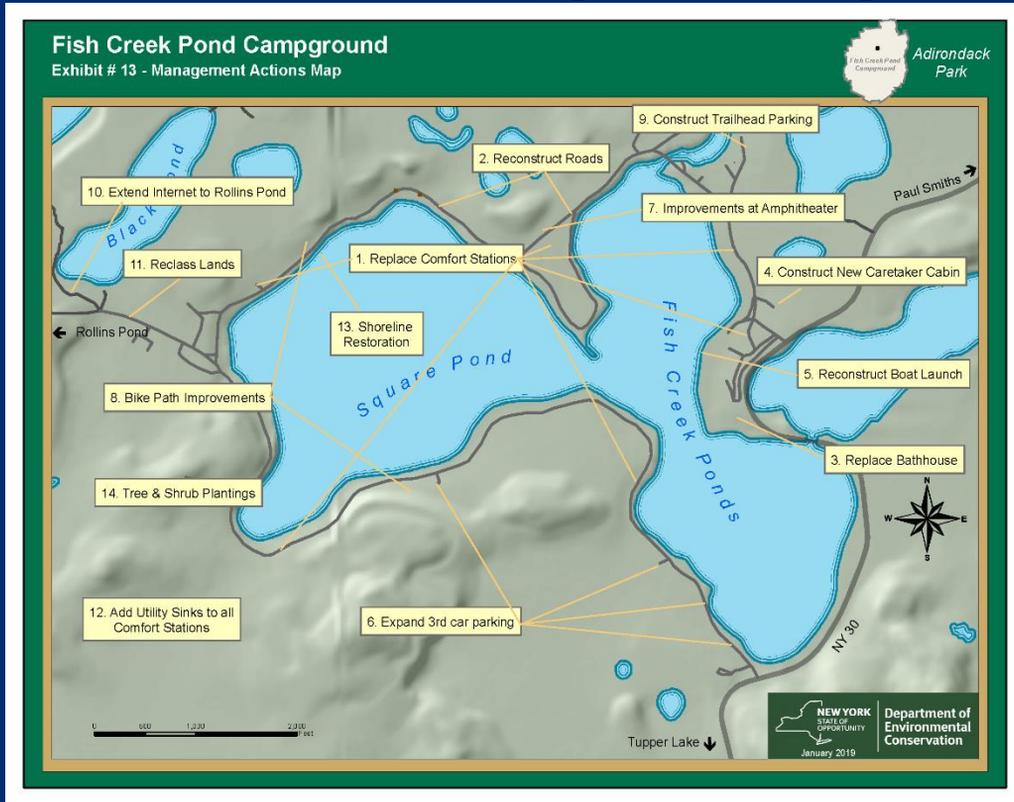


Fish Creek Pond Invasive Species

- A regulation is in effect prohibiting the import of firewood into New York unless it has been heat treated to kill pests. The regulation also limits the transportation of untreated firewood to less than 50 miles from its source.
- In 2019, the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program reported that bush honeysuckle is widespread throughout the campground and should be addressed only after management of higher priority species is complete. It also reported purple loosestrife was mapped and managed in a wet grassy area across from site 182. In total, six plants were removed.
- In 2019, the Adirondack Watershed Institute Stewardship Program reported 2,097 boats were inspected by staff who were on location seven days a week throughout the summer. Invasive plants were removed on 14 occasions.
- DEC also works cooperatively with the Upper Saranac Lake Foundation to assist efforts to control milfoil and its spread.



Fish Creek Pond Campground Mgt. Actions



Proposed Management Actions

- 1. Replace six comfort stations: #3, 7, 13, 17, 24, 29



Existing Comfort Station #13



Proposed Comfort Station with Showers

23 comfort stations on site

- The average age of buildings is 53 years.
- Current toilet and sink fixtures are not water efficient.
- All comfort stations rated in poor condition do not meet current accessibility standards.
- Currently one central shower facility, visitors must travel as far as 4 miles to utilize.

Proposal to replace six comfort stations and include showers at each of the new buildings.

- Locations will be dispersed; minimize travel distance to new shower facilities.
- Siting will prioritize the use of existing disturbed areas to limit clearing of existing vegetation and minimizing topographic alterations.
- Constructed to meet modern design standards, comply with all codes, provide for ADA accessibility, be more energy efficient and environmentally sustainable.
- Tree cutting required will vary for each building.

Proposed Management Actions

2. Reconstruct roads to accommodate two-way traffic and repave



2. Reconstruct roads to accommodate two-way traffic and repave

Existing Road Condition



Road near site 40, 16 feet wide, rutted to 21 feet wide.



Rutted road detail near site 40.



C Loop Road, paved two-way, 10 feet wide.

2. Reconstruct roads to accommodate two-way traffic and repave

Examples of Weekday Vehicle and Pedestrian Traffic



Proposed Management Actions

3. Replace bathhouse



Existing Bathhouse



Proposed Bathhouse

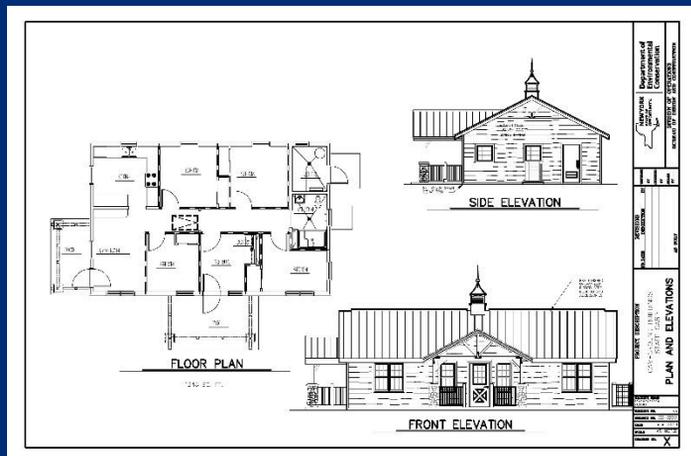
- Proposed bathhouse will meet the changing needs of today's visitors, meet modern design standards, provide for ADA accessibility and be more energy efficient and environmentally sustainable.
- The new facility will provide less area for changing stalls and require a smaller footprint.
- No additional tree clearing is expected at this time
- Alternatives will be considered for managing associated wastewater: replacing the existing wastewater system with a drainage field **-OR-** conveying the associated wastewater to a force main.

Proposed Management Actions

4. Construct a new caretaker cabin



Proposed Staff Housing



- Siting will prioritize the use of existing disturbed areas to limit clearing of existing vegetation and minimizing topographic alterations.
- Potential tile field expansion and construction of the new building is not expected to exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ acre.

Proposed Management Actions

5. Reconstruct boat launch in day use area



Existing Launch

- Currently insufficient for the level of use, including staging, launching and removal.
- Inadequate parking and no safe location for an aquatic invasive species monitoring or a boat washing station.

5. Reconstruct boat launch in day use area

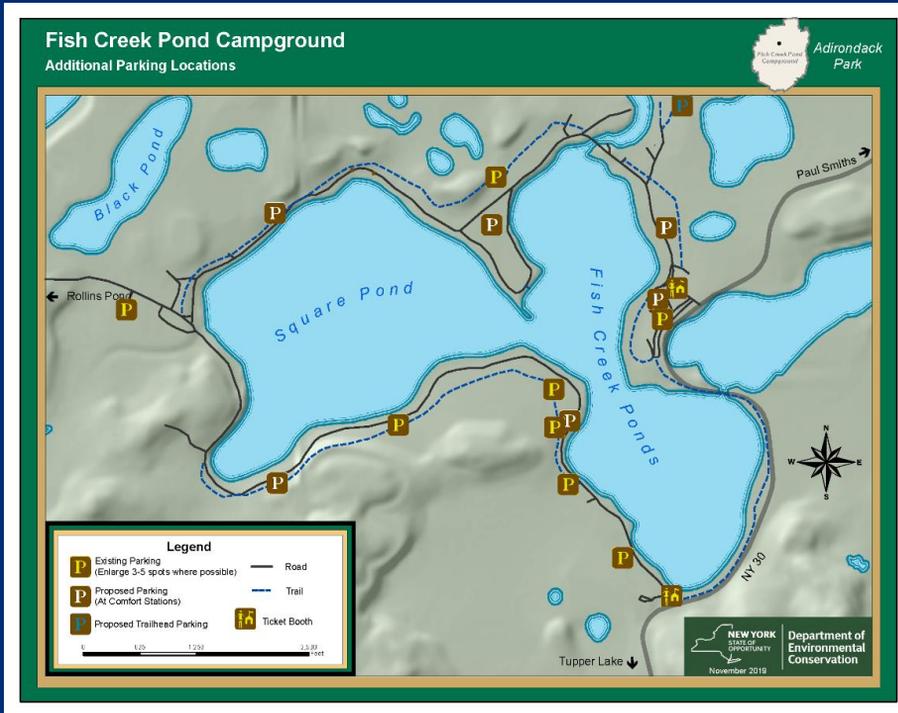


Proposed Launch

- Proposed location is closer to campground entrance to reduce traffic in the camping loops.
- Aims to reduce congestion at the boat launch, provide a more functional launch area, afford adequate parking, supported by the nearby day-use area.
- Proposed location is currently being used administratively to remove accessible pier and docks, has already been impacted.
- The existing launch area will be retained as a roof top launch site.

Proposed Management Actions

6. Expand parking sites



6. Expand parking sites



- Enlarge the existing parking lots where possible by 3-5 parking spots (Approx. 900-2500sf each).
- Formalize three to five additional parking spots at the proposed reconstructed comfort stations.
- Create increased accessibility throughout facility.
- Proposed locations are heavily impacted by informal parking so clearing of existing vegetation and topographic alterations will be minimized.

Proposed Management Actions

7. Make improvements at amphitheater



Existing Amphitheater



Existing Playground

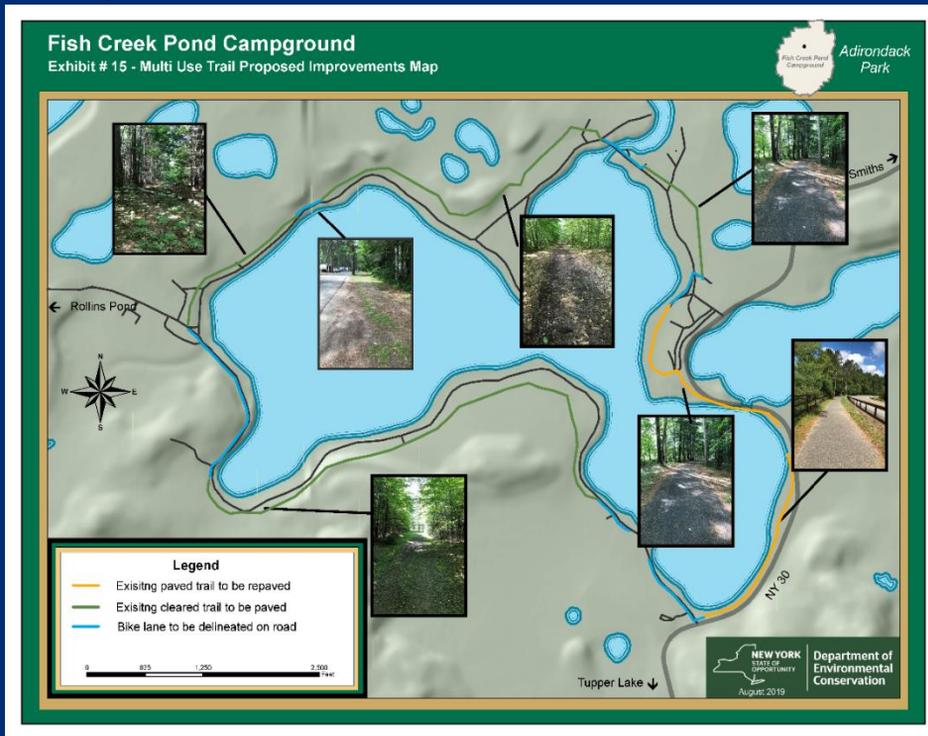
Amphitheater seating is in poor condition and the stage area needs structural and electrical repairs. The swing set is rustic and does not meet current ASTM design standards.

This management action proposes to:

- Repair the amphitheater seating, make required improvements to the electrical systems.
- Replace the swings with a small playground structure which will comply with design standards and improve accessibility.

Proposed Management Actions

8. Improve bike path



8. Improve bike path

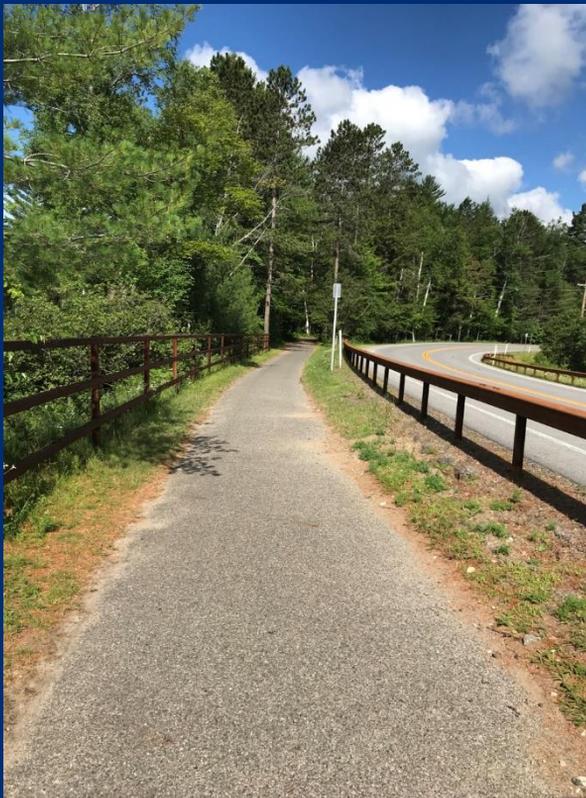


Bike Path near amphitheater.



Detail of bike path condition.

8. Improve bike path



Bike Path near bridge.



Bike Path near DUA.



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8. Improve bike path

- Surface of this trail has deteriorated. 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.
- Propose 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.
- 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.



Bike Path near Site 22.



Bike Path near Site 162.



Bike Path near Site 122.

Proposed Management Action

9. Construct parking lot at Floodwood Trail

- Floodwood trailhead is provides 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 comfort station #8.
- 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.

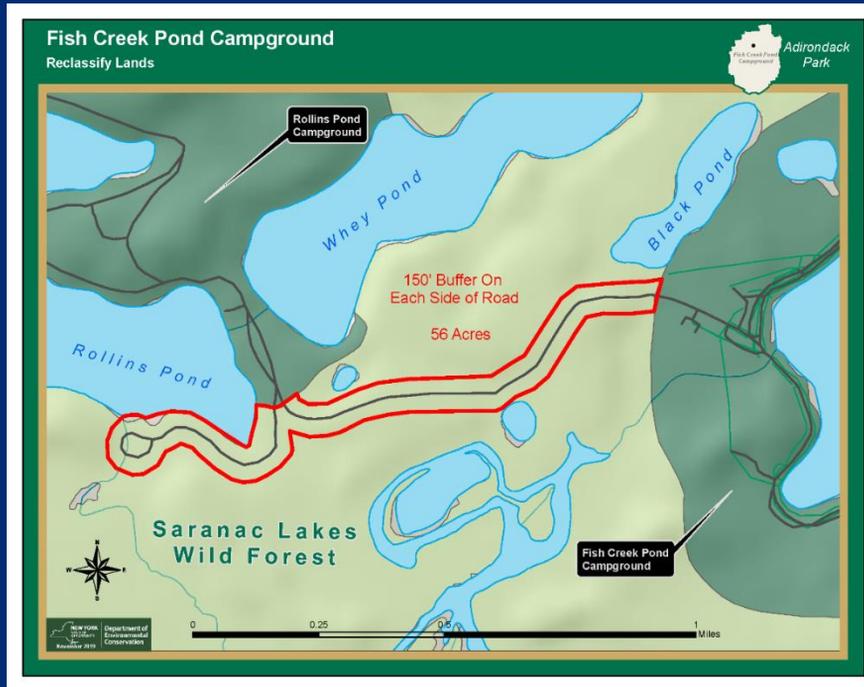
Proposed Management Action

10. Extend internet connection through campground to Rollins Pond Campground

- Fish Creek Pond campground has a high-speed internet connection at the entrance. Facilitates reservations, point of sale transactions and staff reporting, provides weather and emergency information
- Rollins Pond campground operates with a satellite connection that is slower, less reliable and often fails.
- 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 roadway that connects the two facilities.
- Use intended for official/administrative purposes, not the public.
- Plans will be further developed in the future Rollins Pond Campground UMP.

Proposed Management Actions

11. Re-classify area between campgrounds to Intensive Use Area (future plan).



Specifics will be detailed in the future Rollins Pond Campground UMP.

Proposed Management Actions

12. Add utility sinks to all comfort stations

Facility Infrastructure Capacity Analysis				
Facility Description	Design Standard*	Calculated Need	Currently Available	Deficiency
Campsites (355)	1,250 sf/site	1,250 sf/site	1,250 sf/site	None
Trailer dumping station	1 for every 100 sites	4	3	1 *1
Potable water supply	55 gal/day/site	19,525 gpd	141,120 gpd	None
32 day-use picnic tables	5 gal/day/picnicker	960 gpd		None
Water spigots	1/10 campsites	36	82	None
	1/60 picnickers	4	6	None
Lavatories (within 500')	1 for every 15 campsites	24	72	None
	1 for every 60 picnickers	4	4	None
Toilets/urinals (within 500')	2 for every 10 sites	71	166	None
	2 for every 60 picnickers	7	16	None
Utility sinks	Conveniently located	24	0	24
Showers	2 for every 25 sites	28	31	None

***DEC design standards meet or exceed NYS Health Department codes.**

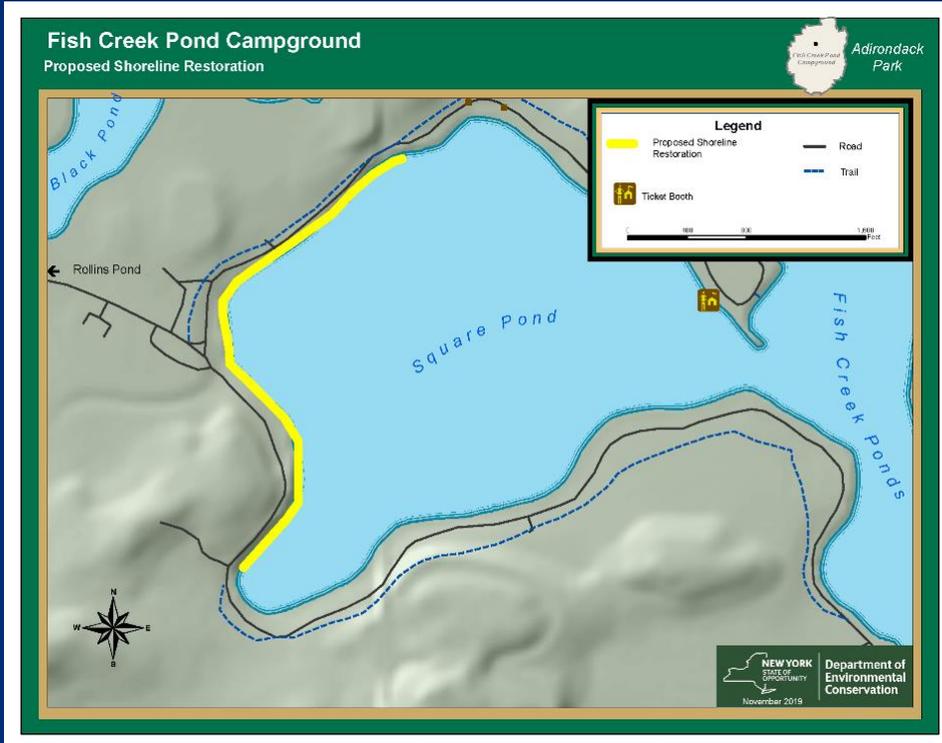
*1 Observations by staff have concluded that a 4th trailer dumping station is not needed.



Currently, utility sinks are not available to campers. With no alternative for disposing of gray water, campers often toss wash and rinse water to the edge of the campsites, leaving soap, food and grease on the ground. This is unsightly and it draws wildlife. Management action proposes to install utility sinks tied into the existing sewer system at each comfort station in the camping area to provide a place for campers to wash dishes or dispose of gray water.

Proposed Management Actions

13. Continue shoreline stabilization



13. Continue shoreline stabilization



- Approximately 3,000 feet of deteriorated shoreline between sites #107 and #160 need repair.

13. Continue shoreline stabilization



- Grading and planting of vegetation will be compatible with the natural shoreline and utilize native species.

Proposed Management Actions

14. Plant trees and shrubs



DEC Operations staff plant an average of 100 native species trees in Fish Creek Pond Campground each year. 200 are set to be planted in Fall 2020.



14. Plant trees and shrubs



Volunteer events such as the annual I Love My Parks Day include planting.



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Proposed Management Actions

15. Campsite Restoration

- This management action is an ongoing process; work identified will be conducted over the life of the plan.
- Minimum of nine campsites per year at Fish Creek Pond Campground will be selected for temporary closure for the purpose of rehabilitation.
- Rehabilitation work will include stabilizing shorelines; maintaining the campsite surface to reduce erosion, soil loss and soil compaction; revegetating the site (between sites and along shorelines); and replacing fireplaces and picnic tables.
- In situations where issues cannot be reasonably addressed an individual campsite may be relocated or closed.
- Work to upgrade sites to meet current accessibility standards will be given priority to meet program goals.

CAMPSITE RESTORATION PROJECT

This campsite is currently closed for rehabilitation.

Please help us improve our campground by staying off this site as it is being restored.

For more information on the Campsite Restoration Project and how you can help in its success please ask campground staff for an informative brochure or visit:
www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/100146.html



N.Y.S DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, ALBANY, N.Y. 12233

15. Campsite Restoration- Visitor Use Management

- Management action will involve a two-step process to develop a unit management plan amendment within four years that addresses the condition of campsites in the Fish Creek unit.
- DEC staff in consultation with Agency staff will first develop visitor use management and monitoring guidance to support the planning and management of Intensive Use Areas in the Adirondack Park.
- Consistent with the federal Interagency Visitor Use Management planning framework, be complementary to the UMP planning process and will identify desired conditions, indicators and standards for the management of Intensive Use Area campsites.
- DEC and the Agency will prepare a unit management plan amendment consistent with the new guidance.
- Amendment will contain diverse design and management actions to balance resource protection and visitor enjoyment including revegetation, relieving soil compaction, replacing amenities, reducing erosion, integration with shoreline restoration efforts, and site relocation or closure.

For more information on the Campsite restoration project please visit

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/100146.html>



Public Comment Period & Summary

- September 1 - October 2, 2020. During that time, 38 written comments and 329 survey responses were received
- Members of the public were not limited to one form of comment or from submitting multiple responses. Some comments were submitted on behalf of organizations or user groups representing many members.
- Responses grouped by theme:
 - Public comments regarding Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring, prevention, and potential impacts to waterbody.
 - Public comments regarding plan to reconstruct the boat launch.
 - Public comments regarding shoreline stabilization and shoreline erosion.
 - Public comments regarding plan to reconstructing and repaving campground roads and additional parking.
 - Public comments regarding the trailer dumping stations.
 - Public comments regarding general condition of campsites and amenities within the facility.
 - Public comments regarding accessibility and ADA standards in the campground.
 - Public comments regarding access and personal use of internet or electric utilities.



Public comments regarding Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring, prevention, and potential impacts to waterbody.

DEC response summary-

- DEC currently funds a watercraft inspection steward at Fish Creek Campground boat launch. Current NYS Regulation 6 NYCRR Part 576 requires that all boaters must clean, drain, and dry their vessel and equipment before launching into a public waterbody.
- DEC has and will continue to provide a steward at Fish Creek Campground in the future as resources allow.
- DEC's designation of sites for decontamination stations is dependent upon the presence of microscopic AIS and boater traffic patterns. The risk of AIS introduction and spread at Fish Creek will be reviewed for future contracts.
- DEC has many education and outreach products that are made available through the watercraft inspection steward program. Includes AIS tip strips, pet trade tips strips, fact sheets, watch cards, towels, and keytainers.

Public comments regarding Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring, prevention, and potential impacts to waterbody, continued

DEC response summary-

- Additional locally targeted education and outreach programs are provided through the Adirondack PRISM in the Adirondack Plant Invasive Species Program.
- DEC has awarded an Invasive Species Grant to the Upper Saranac Foundation to partly fund diver assisted suction harvesting of Eurasian watermilfoil and variable-leaf milfoil in Fish Creek.
- The collaboration between a multitude of organizations, councils, public outreach and education efforts are outlined in the New York State Invasive Species Comprehensive Management Plan.
- Department staff will continue to educate and provided guidance to the public on this important effort.
- UMP has been updated to include priority be placed on the reconstructed boat launch design incorporating adequate space for a boat steward area and/or infrastructure to support a boat washing station.

Public comments regarding plan to reconstruct the boat launch.

DEC response summary-

- Size and configuration of current launch not adequately meeting the needs of users. Not enough parking available, insufficient space for boat steward.
- Management action proposes to reconstruct the boat launch ramp near the fishing pier west of the day-use parking lot.
- Proposal will reduce congestion at the boat launch, provide a more functional launch area, afford adequate parking, and reduce traffic in the camping loops.
- UMP has been updated to provide enough vehicle and trailer clearance to create a safe location for an aquatic invasive species monitoring steward and/or boat washing station.
- The existing launch area will be retained as a roof top launch site with no ramp for trailered boats provided. Signage will direct boaters to visit the steward for inspection before launching.
- Visitors charged a day-use fee to access the launch, may discourage overuse.

Public comments regarding plan to reconstruct the boat launch, continued

DEC response summary-

- Data from the Adirondack Watershed Institute Stewardship Program, only 36% of boats entering the water from the Fish Creek Pond launch are motorized. In comparison, 76% of boats launching from DEC's boat launch on Upper Saranac Lake are motorized.
- Program data has shown that day-use visitation has been consistently trending down at rate of 9% over the last five camping seasons.
- Overnight campground visitation is much higher than day-use visitation, and most campers tend to use non-motorized boats during their stay.
- The Department is committed to monitoring use and working in cooperation with the Upper Saranac Lake Association, the Upper Saranac Foundation, the Adirondack Watershed Institute Stewardship Program and other user groups and organizations to prevent overtaxing the resource.

Public comments regarding shoreline stabilization and shoreline erosion.

DEC response summary-

- Management action proposes to repair an additional ~3000 feet of eroded shoreline by utilizing Department best practices and techniques, incorporating native vegetation, and maintaining the aesthetic of a natural shoreline. Design and implementation will be done in coordination with APA.
- As part of the Department's ongoing Campsite Restoration Project, campsites will be rehabilitated on a rotating basis. During this time aspects such as screening, erosion, aesthetics and accessibility are addressed.
- Waterfront site rehabilitation will include a focus on correcting and mitigating impacts on the shoreline.

Public comments regarding plan to reconstructing and repaving campground roads and additional parking.

DEC response summary-

- Much of road system rehabilitation will be within the existing road footprint or within the existing impacted road shoulders requiring little additional vegetative clearing and limited topographic alterations.
- Rehabilitation will improve vehicular and pedestrian safety, assist in reducing impacts to wetlands and help alleviate stormwater erosion and sedimentation issues.
- Throughout the facility there are informal parking areas that have led to crumbling road shoulders and heavily impacted areas. By formalizing these parking areas, the Department can address and prevent any potential wetlands disturbance and discourage patrons from parking along the roadside and further damaging roads.
- Areas that have been identified as potential parking areas will require minimal vegetative clearing.

Public comments regarding plan to reconstructing and repaving campground roads and additional parking.

DEC response summary-

- The road rehabilitation and paved parking areas will assist with addressing stormwater management. Road crowning to maintain sheet flow to appropriate sites to avoid resource impacts, adding check dams where needed to the existing cross drainage and providing adequate road and shoulder surface to limit adjacent soil compaction are methods that will be used. Supplying permeable, granular shoulders to roads and adding vegetation, along with continuing shoreline stabilization, impacts will be further reduced.
- Widening the road will occur in an area identified as the greatest concern to user safety and meet DOT standards. Widening the road will allow for two-way travel at the most congested area of the roadway. Traffic speed limits will continue to be enforced by campground staff and signage.
- The UMP also proposes to make improvements to the bike path, which should further alleviate congestion on the campground roads.

Public comments regarding the trailer dumping stations.

DEC response summary-

- There are three trailer dumping stations in the facility for campers to use.
- Staff observation and current volume of use indicates that the construction of an additional trailer dumping station is currently unnecessary.

Public comments regarding general condition of campsites and amenities within the facility.

DEC Response summary-

- Management actions are consistent with the 1990 *Generic Unit Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Campgrounds and Day-Use Areas* which states that facilities found to be contributing to the degradation of physical, biological and sociological resources of the recreation area will be rehabilitated to upgrade and/or stabilize resource values.
- Concerns regarding campsites have been noted and the UMP has been updated to include site restoration work which has been ongoing as part of the Department's Campsite Restoration Project. As part of the Department's Campsite Restoration Project, 2.5% of campsites per year are removed from inventory for rehabilitation. During this time aspects such as screening, erosion, aesthetics and accessibility are addressed.
- In situations where issues cannot be reasonably addressed an individual campsite may be relocated or closed.
- For more information on the Campsite restoration project or which sites at Fish Creek are currently being restored please visit <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/100146.html>



Public comments regarding accessibility and ADA standards in the campground.

DEC response summary-

- An assessment was done in October 2020 by the Department's Statewide Accessibility ADA Coordinator and the plan has been updated to reflect the most current accessible features within the facility.
- The Department requires all new construction and rehabilitation projects to meet current ADA and Department of Health standards.
- For further information, please contact Leah Akins, DEC Statewide ADA Accessibility Coordinator, at accessibility@dec.ny.gov

Public comments regarding access and personal use of internet or electric utilities.

DEC response summary-

- The management action regarding the extension of internet connection will be further addressed in a future UMP (Rollins Pond Campground).
- The intended use of this internet connection is for administrative use relating to daily operations of the facility and will not be available to the public.
- This use is consistent with the guidelines for appropriate use in the *Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan* for DEC campgrounds, which states facilities will be of a rustic nature without utility hookups and other elaborate facilities customarily provided by private campgrounds.

Thank You

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**Adirondack
Park Agency**

Fish Creek Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan Proposed Final

Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan Conformance Review

May 13, 2021

Guidelines for Management and Use

Basic guidelines

Primary management guideline will be to provide:

- public opportunities
- in a setting and scale in harmony with the relatively wild and undeveloped character of the Adirondack Park

Guidelines for Management and Use

Basic guidelines

All intensive use facilities should be located, designed and managed:

- to blend with the Adirondack environment;
- have minimum adverse impact on surrounding state and private lands;

Guidelines for Management and Use

Basic guidelines

Construction and development activities will:

- avoid material alteration of wetlands;
- minimize extensive topographic alterations;
- limit vegetative clearing;
- preserve the scenic, natural and open space resources of the intensive use area.

Guidelines for Management and Use Campgrounds

- Rustic nature
- Natural character
- Natural materials

Guidelines for Management and Use Campgrounds

- Priority should be given to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Fish Creek Campground

APSLMP Conformance Comment

- AGENCY CONTACT FOR INFORMATION OR WRITTEN COMMENTS:

Richard Weber, Deputy Director, Planning
Adirondack Park Agency
Post Office Box 99
1133 State Route 86
Ray Brook, NY 12977
Phone: (518) 891-4050
Fax: (518) 891-3938
Email: SLMP_Comments@apa.ny.gov

The Agency will be accepting Public Comment until **June 14, 2021**
The Proposed Final UMP Amendment is available at the Agency website:
www.apa.ny.gov