

## **Kelsey Notch Trail Environmental Compliance Report 2022**

**Date Reviewed:** October 5, 2022

**In attendance:** Jake DeBow (NHFG-Regional Wildlife Biologist), John Magee (NHFG-Fisheries Habitat Biologist), Clint Savage (NH Trails Bureau-Regional Supervisor), and Maggie Machinist (NH Forests and Lands-Regional Forester)

**Overview-** The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources is required to submit an environmental compliance report to CORD annually. This report is a requirement of the conditional approval by CORD, dated March 29, 2021, for the Kelsey Notch Trail.

### **Recommendations from the 2021 Report (see the 2021 report for photos)**

- Fix the mud hole near the property line toward Diamond Peaks. (figure 1)
- Place a culvert before the bridge at the end to address the sitting water near the mud hole. (figure 1)
- Fix culvert header where it is washing and slope the road away from the outlet of the culvert. (figure 1)
- Continue to monitor and clean out the rubber water diversion devices that are in various locations on the trails.
- Continue to monitor and treat the invasive species. It will take many seasons to eradicate the *Phragmites australis* and should be treated each year during the growing season.

### **2022**

The Kelsey Notch Trail was open this season from May 27, 2022 to October 10, 2022. There were 3 trail counters deployed the entire time the trail was open. At the end of the season, trail counters were gathered, and numbers calculated.

The results are as follows:

Corridor B- 10,167 trips

Corridor C North- 11,035 trips

Corridor C- 4,194 trips

The Trails Bureau did little to no maintenance on the trail this year, due to an administrative issue. DNCR normally completes roadwork, etc. through the rental agreement process (DNCR-88), however, administrative services made changes to this process in late summer. These changes restricted DNCR's ability to get on the ground work done including the regular maintenance on the Kelsey Notch Trail in a timely manner. Changes to this process include going to Governor and Council for approval for contracted equipment services across state lands greater than \$10,000 (services are cumulative throughout the year). The process is now more arduous and lengthy, which has diminished the amount of work that was done across state properties this summer due to time constraints to get the work approved and completed before fall. All the work that was not completed last year will be completed during the summer of 2023.

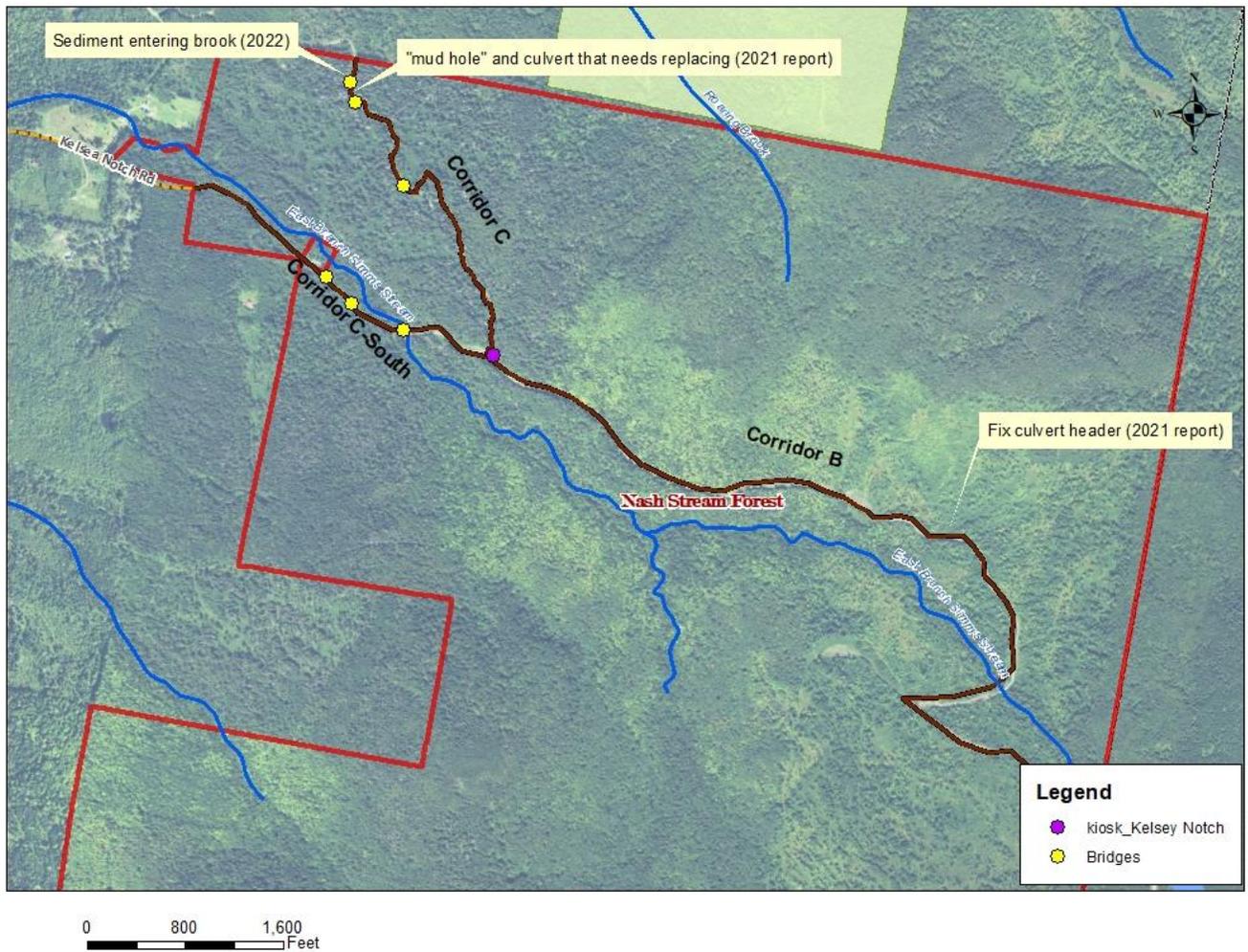


Figure 1- Map of the area showing the location of bridges, kiosks and trails labeled, and areas in need of repair.

### **Findings**

The trail was visited twice throughout the season by Forests and Lands staff and as well by Trails Bureau staff. Trails Bureau staff, checked the status of the trail at the beginning of the season and put the counters out on May 27, 2022. Forests and Lands staff noted that the trail was in rough condition this year compared to years past during the site visit on September 14, 2022.

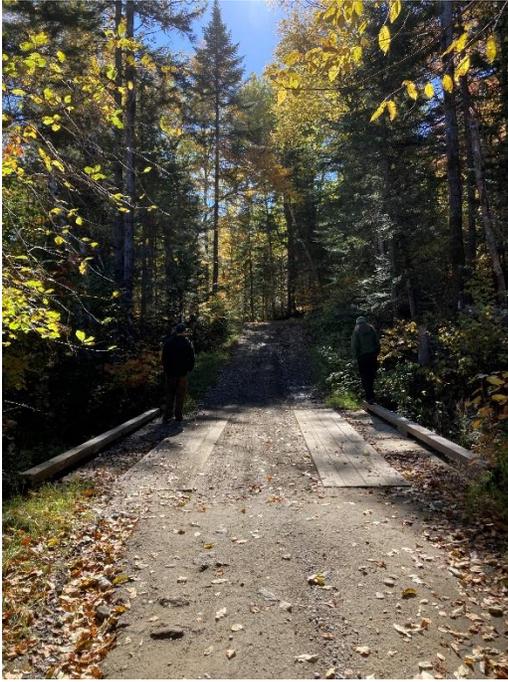


*Figure 2- Photos from the September 14 visit*

On October 5, 2022 the Kelsey Notch trail was reviewed on site by Jake DeBow (NHFG- Regional Wildlife Biologist), John Magee (NHFG- Fisheries Habitat Biologist), Clint Savage (NH Trails Bureau-Regional Supervisor), and Maggie Machinist (NH Forests and Lands- Regional Forester) as the official monitoring trip.

#### Corridor C- South

The monitoring began at the property line, reviewing Corridor C- South. There are two bridges on this section of trail soon after coming onto the property. Both bridges seemed to be in good condition. Then the monitoring crew looked at the large bridge over the East Branch of Simms Stream, which also seemed in good condition. There was no apparent sediment getting into the brooks that flowed underneath the bridges at these locations. Bridges appeared adequate to allow for movement of both aquatic and terrestrial organisms.



*Figure 3- Shows the condition of the bridges (top left- first bridge, top right- second bridge, bottom right- large bridge over East Branch of Simms Stream)*

It was noted that the roots from the trees seemed to be protruding more than in years past on the flat section immediately west of the large bridge. (see figure 4)



*Figure 4- Shows the condition of the trail and the noted exposed roots.*

The hill leading up to the kiosk was a rougher than years past when more maintenance was completed. The rubber water diversion devices were completely filled in with material and were not functioning properly.



*Figure 5- Shows the condition of the trail on the steep hill leading to the kiosk and the rubber water devices.*

## Corridor C

Heading toward Diamond Peaks (Corridor C), on foot monitoring continued toward the boundary line. This trail was very hard packed, despite having no maintenance throughout the year. There were some sections that had minor sedimentation, meaning there was evidence of sediment that had been washed away from trail but the trail was in fair/good condition.



*Figure 6- Shows condition of trail and some of the washing that had occurred.*

There was sediment observed entering into one of the brooks along Corridor C, on the last bridge before the property line. (Figure 7)

On the 2021 report, it was noted that there was a “mud hole” immediately south of the boundary line, but still on the property of Nash Stream Forest. Due to the lack of maintenance, this area remained and continued to be a settling area for water. (Figure 7)



*Figure 7- Shows sediment entering brook at bridge location and shows the “mud hole”*

### Corridor B

The hill leading from the kiosk toward Kelsey Notch (corridor B) was in poor condition due to lack of maintenance and amount of use. The rubber water devices were not working and some were broken. This hill was in very rough shape.

In 2021, it was noted that there was one location where some sediment was running down the trail and getting into the brook next to the rock/culvert, since there was no maintenance done on the trail this was still an issue in 2022.



*Figure 8- Depicting the rubber water diversion devices, where the rubber is completely missing.*

Each year, the sharp corner leading up to Kelsey Notch gets a significant berm. This happens from the dirt and rocks getting kicked out as the OHRVs turn and head up the hill, exacerbated with speed.



*Figure 9- Shows berm on corner of trail*

In 2020, we found a few patches of *Phragmites australis*. These areas were treated on September 3, 2021 with glyphosate by Fish and Game staff who are licensed pesticide applicators. During

our 2022 visit, we found no evidence of new *Phragmites australis* plants and no living plants. This will continue to be monitored each year, during the growing season by Forests and Lands and Fish and Game staff.



*Figure 10- Depicts the area where the Phragmites australis was previously found in 2021, but no plants were found in 2022.*

### **Recommendations-**

#### **2021 Recommendations that still need to be implemented**

- Fix the mud hole near the property line toward Diamond Peaks (Figure 4 from 2021 report).
- Place a culvert before the bridge at the end to address the sitting water near the mud hole (Figure 4 from 2021 report) .
- Fix culvert header where it is washing and slope the road away from the outlet of the culvert (Figure 6 from 2021 report).
- Continue to monitor and clean out the rubber water diversion devices that are in various locations on the trails.

#### **2022 Recommendations**

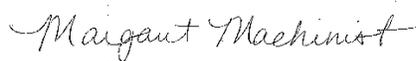
- Follow through with the 2021 recommendations
- Continue to monitor and treat the invasive species as needed. It may take many seasons to eradicate the *Phragmites australis* and it should be monitored during the growing season.
- Several of the rubber water diversion devices were in disrepair or breaking. Evaluate all devices and replace or repair the ones that are in need of attention.

-Evaluate the exposed roots on trail (Figure 3) and see if this concern can be alleviated.

**Conclusion-** Due to the lack of maintenance the trail was in worse shape than normal, however, there were no major environmental issues along the trail even though there was no maintenance. There was sediment leaving the trail surface, but most of it was being contained in vegetation or in the sediment basins created. There was one location where it was evident that sediment was reaching and entering a perennial stream.

Fish and Game continues to have concern regarding wildlife impact of ATV noise during high volume trail use days. This is of particular concern during spring and early summer months (May/June) when song birds are nesting/ fledging and mammals are in the early days of raising young. For example, based on trip counter data Saturday May 28<sup>th</sup> and Sunday May 29<sup>th</sup> of 2022 saw 427 and 629 trips respectively on the Corridor C North trail. It is conceivable that >1000 trips of ATV's during a two day period could be disruptive during the calving period for animals like deer and moose. Otherwise, Fish and Game has no concern over current trail conditions related to wildlife impacts.

The trail is currently closed for the season until the spring of 2023, when conditions allow, after May 25.



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Margaret Machinist, Regional Forester



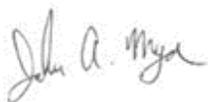
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Clint Savage, Trails Bureau District Supervisor



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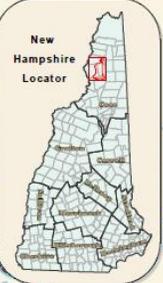
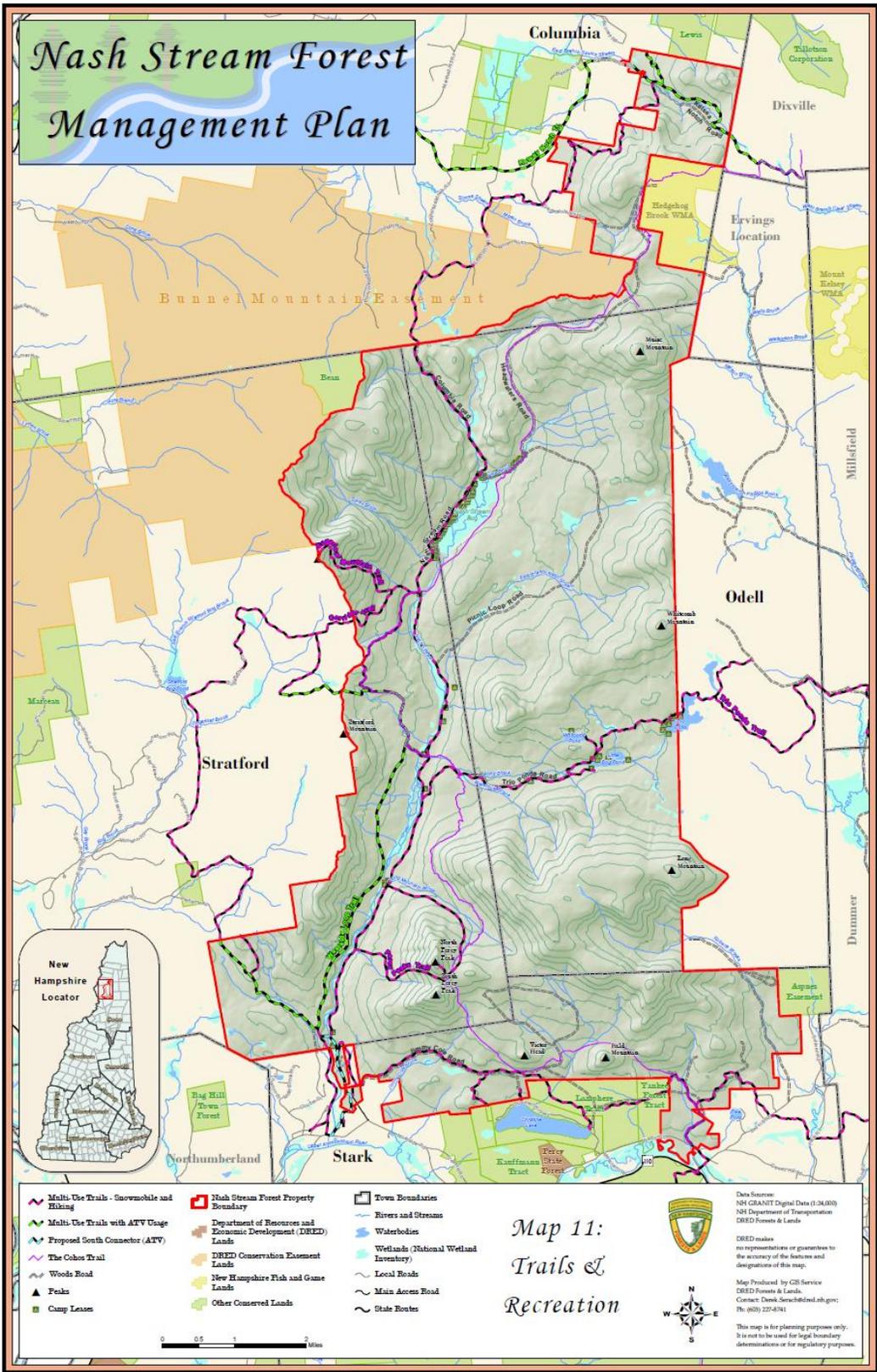
Jake DeBow, Regional Wildlife Biologist



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John Magee, Fisheries Habitat Biologist

# Nash Stream Forest Management Plan



- Multi-Use Trails - Snowmobile and Hiking
- Multi-Use Trails with ATV Usage
- Proposed South Connector (ATV)
- The Cobos Trail
- Woods Road
- Peaks
- Camp Leases
- Nash Stream Forest Property Boundary
- Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) Lands
- DRED Conservation Easement Lands
- New Hampshire Fish and Game Lands
- Other Conserved Lands
- Town Boundaries
- Rivers and Streams
- Waterbodies
- Wetlands (National Wetland Inventory)
- Local Roads
- Main Access Road
- State Routes

Map 11:  
Trails &  
Recreation



Data Sources:  
NH GRANIT Digital Data (1/24/2009)  
NH Department of Transportation  
DRED Forests & Lands

DRED makes no representations or guarantees to the accuracy of the features and designations of this map.

Map Produced by GIS Service  
DRED Forests & Lands  
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This map is for planning purposes only. It is not to be used for legal boundary determinations or for regulatory purposes.

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