

Trails & Open Space Committee Minutes
May 5, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Joe Grasso; Committee Members Eric Connolly, Kevin Tollisen and Matt Veitch; Supervisors Phil Barrett, Mark Hammond, Bill Peck, Kevin Tollisen; Steve Bulger, Matt Rose, Christine Rush, County Administrator; Michael Hartnett, County Attorney; Jason Kemper, Jeff Williams, Planning; Barbara Conner, Malta Open Space; Maria Trabka, Rob Davies, Molly Kalil, Michael Gaige, Kurto Smemo, Anna Laloe, Courtney Roach, Ray O’Conor.

Chairman Grasso called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Kinowski, the minutes of the April 7, 2022 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Connolly, seconded by Mr. Kinowski, to authorize amending Resolution 262-2017 to increase the total project cost of the Floud Memorial Preserve Farmland/Open Space Preservation Grant in the Town of Halfmoon. The motion passed. Supervisor Tollisen recused.

Mr. Kemper said that when land preservation grant projects are approved, there is a leeway that allows for the total project cost to fluctuate up or down 10%. The total project cost of this project when approved in 2017 was \$100K, and the total project cost has now come in at \$127,284. The County’s contribution remains the same and the project still meets of the original merits, however a Board Resolution is necessary to increase the total project cost.

A motion was made by Mr. Tollisen, seconded by Mr. Veitch, Committee approval of the 2022 Trails Grant Application. Unanimous.

Mr. Kemper said that the Trails Grant program has been ongoing for several years now. To date \$486K has been contributed by the County which generated a total project cost of \$3M for Saratoga County Communities. This year’s total grant funding has increased to \$100K, with a \$10K per project limit. Submission deadline has moved to July 20.

Mr. Kemper gave a brief overview of Planning & Economic Development projects.

- There are currently 8 pending Open Space/Farmland Protection Projects being administered by the Planning Department, 3 (Town of Northumberland/Bolesh and Town of Galway/Lendl Farm & Town of Halfmoon/Floud) submitted for reimbursement and are progressing toward closure.
- There are currently 19 (down from 21 at last update) pending Trail Projects being administered by the Planning Department, 2 closed since the last update (2019 & 2020 Town of Galway Projects). The 2019 Town of Wilton has also recently submitted for reimbursement and should be closed soon. Reimbursement is being reviewed for 2 projects ((Joint project with Stillwater, Mechanicville, Northumberland, Saratoga (2018) and Galway/Providence project (2019)).

- County Fish Stocking efforts have begun and will be completed by mid-May. Great Sacandaga Lake Stocking and Corinth Reservoir Property Stocking will have participation by local schoolchildren. \$25K of funding per year is in the Planning & Economic Development Department's budget annually for fish stocking and it supplements the State's program.

Mr. Grasso introduced Maria Trabka and the Graphite Range Community Force Management Team to give a presentation to the Committee regarding their work and the Saratoga County Community Forest Project. Mr. Grasso said that he believes this project will have a very long term, positive, and regional impacts on the County and communities. Mr. Roach and Ms. Kalil presented the PowerPoint. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Grasso introduced Mr. Rob Davies. Mr. Davies will be the new Executive Director of Saratoga PLAN upon the retirement of Maria Trabka on May 16th. Mr. Davies thanked Ms. Trabka for all of her efforts over the past 14 years. Mr. Davis recently retired as the State Forester for the State of New York.

On a motion made by Mr. Tollisen, seconded by Mr. Veitch, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Clerk of the Board

GRAPHITE RANGE

a saratoga county community forest



5/5/2022



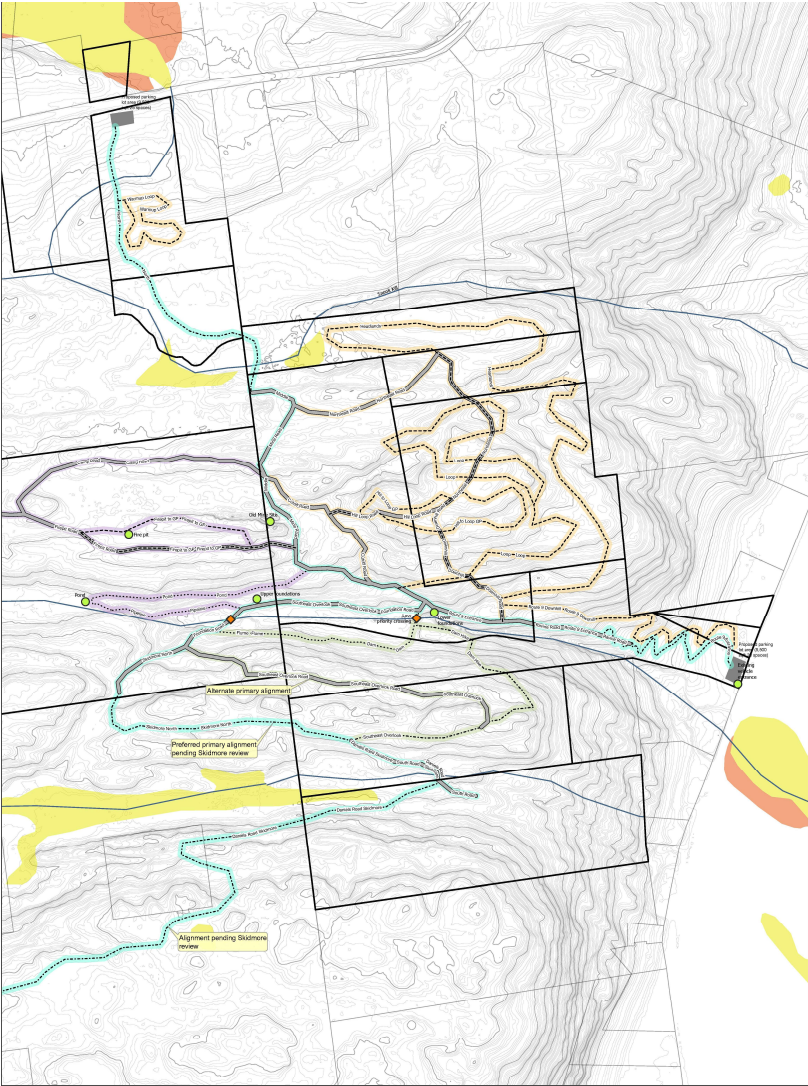
Graphite Range, a saratoga county community forest

AGENDA

- Site Characteristics and Location
- Community Forest Management Team
- Funding
- Timing
- Palmertown Range
- Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails
- Q&A Discussions

Developed as a multi-use, community-managed forest owned by Saratoga County, the proposed 222-acre Graphite Range Community Forest will become a **recreational hub** for the surrounding communities and a space for environmental education and **economic opportunity** – all while helping to permanently protect the **ecological value and resilience** of the southern foothills of the Adirondacks, an area vital for regional natural resource connectivity.





**Wilton Partners Conceptual Trail Design
Draft Map 9/24/21**



- Legend**
- Point of Interest
 - Ridge
 - Multi-Use Trail
 - Walking Trail
 - Frondip Trail
 - Headlands Mountainbike Area
 - Historic Walking Area
 - Wilderness Area
 - Conceptual Trail Alignments
 - DEC Wetlands
 - FWD Wetlands
 - County Creeks and Streams
 - Trail Area
 - Headlands Mountainbike Area
 - Historic Walking Area
 - Wilderness Area

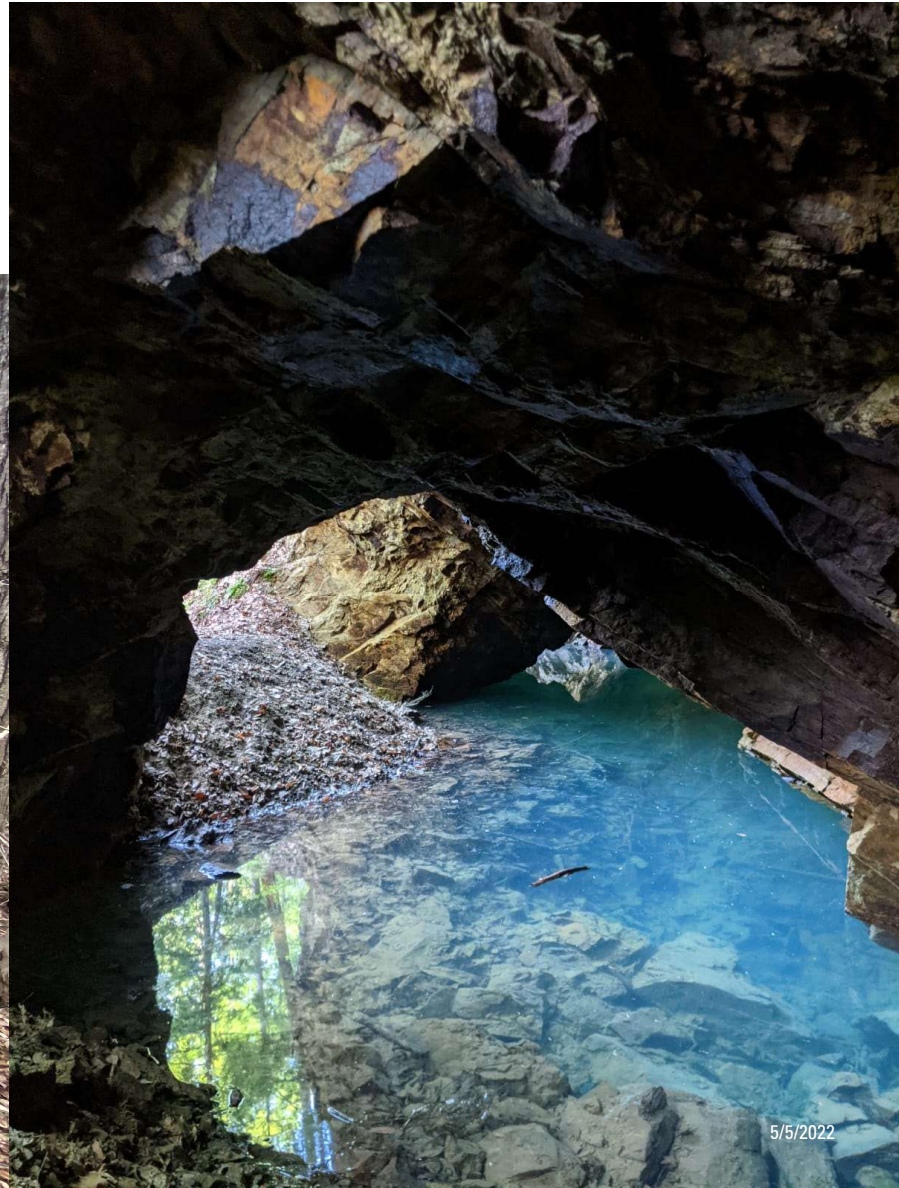


5/5/2022

HISTORIC GRAPHITE MINES



GRAPHITE RANGE, a saratoga county community forest



5/5/2022



COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT TEAM

Meets semi-weekly

Preparing management plan

Will advise and assist county with ongoing onsite management, stewardship, and programming

Members:

Jason Kemper, SarCo Director of Planning

Molly Kalil, Open Air Sports, youth ed

Ray O'Connor, Wilton Town Board, writer, avid hiker

Seth Dunn, Saratoga PLAN Board of Directors, trail runner

Courtney Roach, US Navy, GRCF neighbor and steward

Anna Laloe, Geologist, Shredders

Kurt Smemo, Skidmore Professor

Support Crew:

Michael Gaige, Ecologist

Derek Copperud, US Navy

Rich McDermott, NYS DEC Forester

Maria Trabka, Saratoga PLAN

GRAPHITE RANGE, a saratoga county community forest

5/5/2022

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FUNDING:

US Forest Service	\$391,000
Saratoga County Commitment (for acquisition)	\$120,000
Saratoga County Trails Grants (2)	\$20,000
Landowner Bargain Sale	\$200,000
Landowner Trail-building investment	\$150,000
Private Donations to date	\$150,000
Fundraising Campaign Underway for trail amenities	\$20,000
Saratoga PLAN Northern Gateway Acquisition	\$100,000

Currently, Saratoga PLAN is serving as the fiscal agent for accepting and tracking donations. PLAN's Board of Directors has agreed to continue in that role post-acquisition should the County and management team desire.



GRAPHITE RANGE COMMUNITY FOREST

Timeline:

Spring 2022: Fundraising campaign

Spring-Summer 2022: Building of Phase 1 trails; due diligence for Phase 1 acquisition 202 acres; CF Management Team presents management plan to Saratoga County BoS

Fall 2022: Closing on Phase 1 acquisition; Wilton Hwy Dept builds Route 9 parking lot; opening of Phase 1 trails; closing on Phase 2 "Northern Gateway" acquisition (20 acres)

2023: Greenfield Hwy Dept builds parking lot on Wilton Road; building of Phase 2 trails; seek funding for accessible trail off Wilton Road.

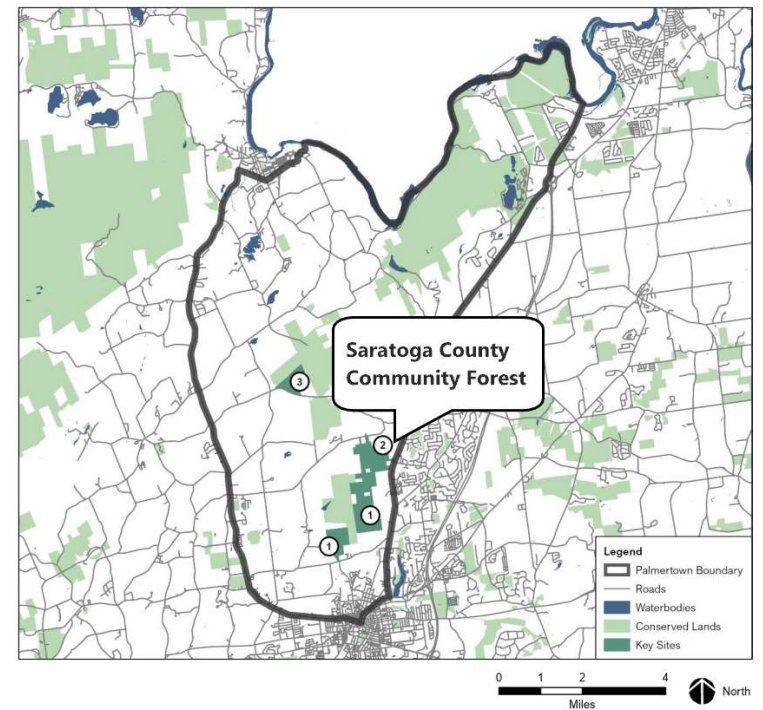


PALMERTOWN RANGE

The vision for the Palmertown Range is to establish the 40,000-acre area as a regional recreation destination and bolster its economic development while conserving critically important natural resources.

PROTECT. PLAY. PROSPER.

GRAPHITE RANGE, a saratoga county community forest



Saratoga County

Town of Moreau

Town of Wilton

Town of Corinth

Town of Greenfield

Village of Corinth

City of Saratoga Springs

NYS DEC

NYS Office of Parks & Recreation

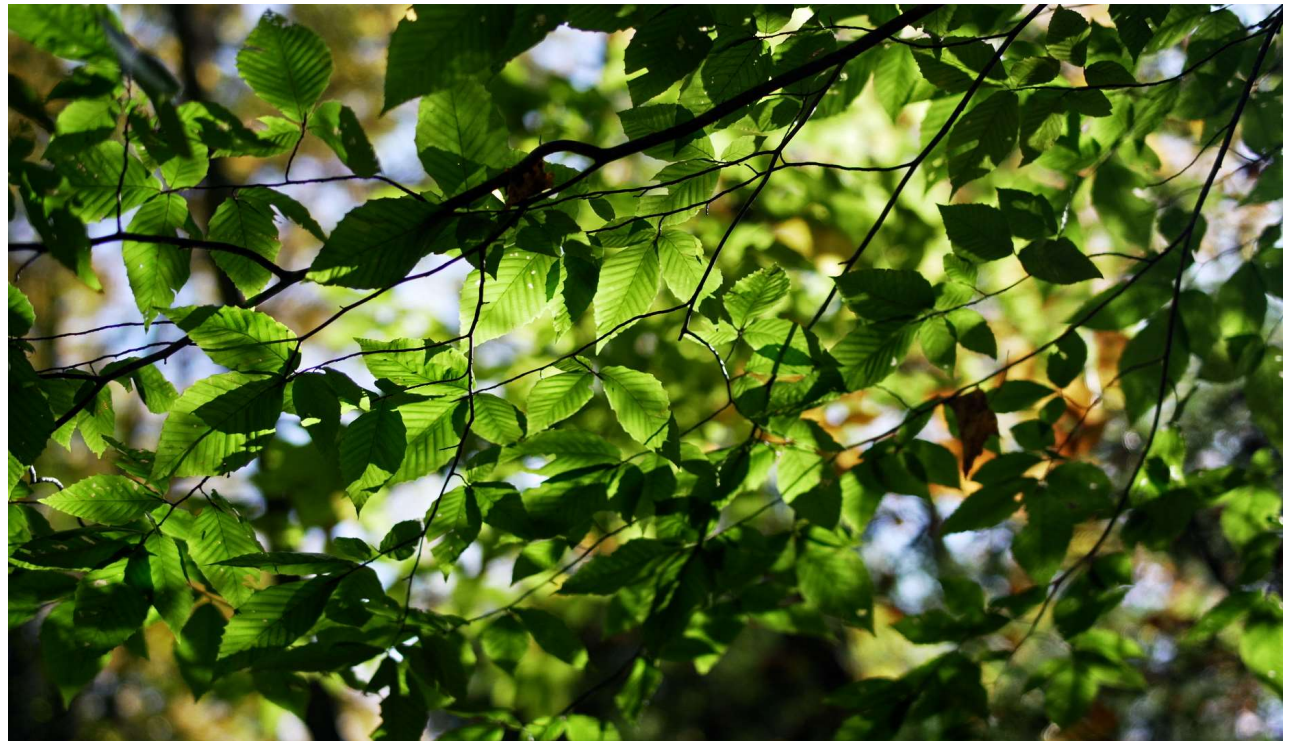
Skidmore College

Open Space Institute

Saratoga PLAN

Hikers, Mountain Bikers, Horseback
Trail Riders, Snowmobilers, Non-
traditional Trail Users

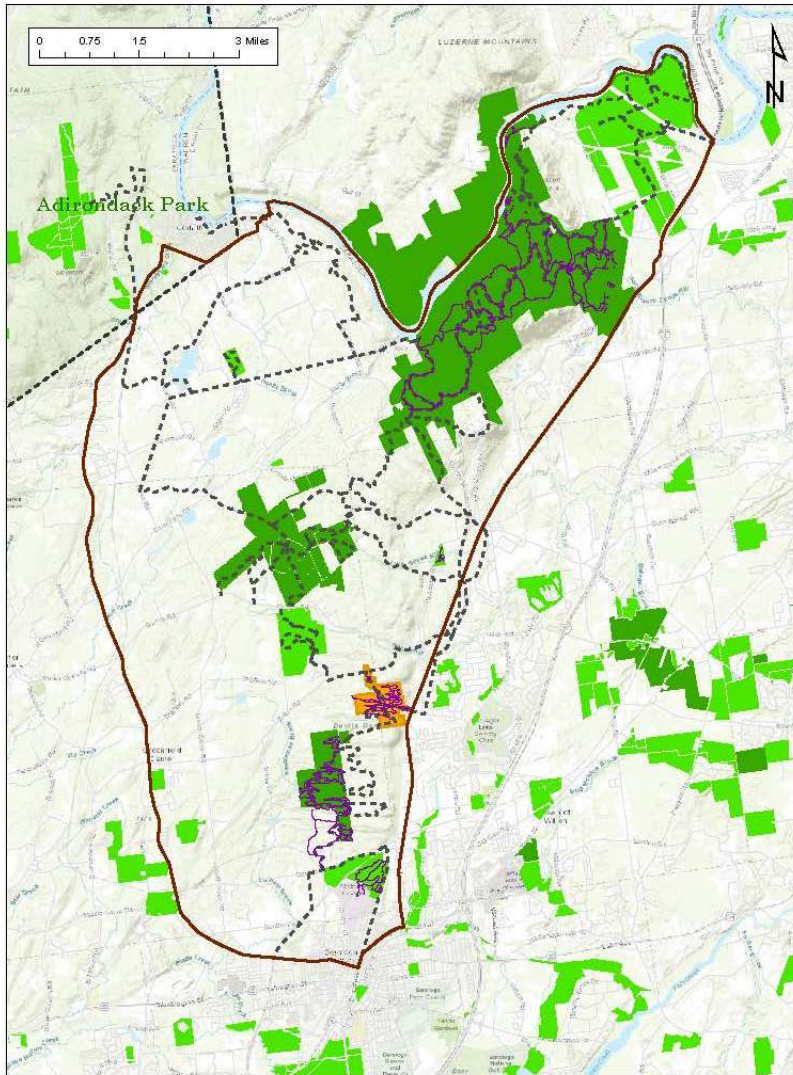
PALMERTOWN PARTNERS





PALMERTOWN PARTNERSHIP

- Obtained multiple grants
- Hired a coordinator for its first two years (expired)
- Crafted Conservation, Recreation, and Economic Development Strategies
- Offered outdoor exploration and trail scouting opportunities over several years to familiarize community with the Range and its assets





 Saratoga County Community Forest  Other Protected Land

SARAH B. FOULKE FRIENDSHIP TRAILS

- Completed master plan for a 50+-mile trail network throughout the Palmetown Range: Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails
 - Graphite Range Community Forest is a key linkage in the Friendship Trails
 - Hired professional trail planners to design more detailed trail systems for 6 sites in the Range
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THANK YOU

- Questions: from the Supervisors
- Discussion Topic: how best for the community forest management team to interact with the County?