dcr
Massachusetts

Notice of Intent

Savoy Mountain State Forest

Invasive Plant and Habitat Management Plan

Ecological Restoration Limited Project

Savoy, Massachusetts

September 2025

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Introduction

The Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) has identified a number of areas within Savoy Mountain State Forest where invasive vegetation is beginning to encroach on the natural areas. There are numerous studies related to compromised ecological functions within natural systems due to invasive plant populations. The State Forest's upland forests, forested wetlands, wetland meadows, emergent marshes, vernal pools and MESA listed species habitat are becoming imperiled because invasive plants are beginning to establish themselves in natural areas. Invasive plants will outcompete and replace natives, and in most instances create dense monocultures. The DCR intends to address this problem through initial treatments and ongoing maintenance treatments of invasive vegetation to support native vegetation and prevent the degradation of native natural systems.

The DCR has also identified approximately 37 acres of marginal areas that are a complicated matrix of degraded wetlands and degraded uplands resulting from intensive past land uses. These sites, through the proposed management in this plan, will provide excellent wildlife habitat, and provide opportunities for these to reach their highest ecological functions. The DCR intends to perform the removal of overstory trees within these areas that are largely stunted and unhealthy relative to their counterparts in minimally disturbed areas. The understory currently contains a diverse layer of shrubs, small trees, young saplings, and sun-loving understory plants that will be released, and the exposure of sun and warmth to the forest floor will encourage recruitment from the seed bank. The areas intended for wildlife management are also sites of proposed DCR research projects to demonstrate restoration techniques that improve wetland function on the landscape, efforts to improve wetland pollinator habitat, improve soft mast production in the face of beech bark disease for wildlife habitat, and maintain connectivity with other areas that have been the subject of previous management.

This Invasive and Exotic Plant Management Plan, Habitat Management in Wetlands Plan, and Ecological Restoration Notice of Intent to initiate invasive plant management and manage for high-value wildlife habitat in wetlands will enhance wetland resource areas, natural communities, cultural resources, and state listed wildlife habitat.

Invasive plants that have been identified on the State Forest include shrub honeysuckle *(Lonicera sp.)*, multiflora rose *(Rosa multiflora)*, garlic mustard *(Alliaria petiolate)*, Japanese barberry *(Berberis thunbergii)*, Asiatic bittersweet *(Celastrus orbiculatus)*, and Norway maple *(Acer platanoides)*. The DCR intends to treat all invasive plants as they occur because new infestations of both known and previously unidentified species are routinely discovered. Although the invasive plants listed have been identified throughout the State

Forest, specific management zones have been prioritized based on observed populations and plans to conduct forest management activities that include harvesting, mowing, invasive plant control, habitat work, and timber stand improvement (TSI). Invasive plant management is within Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW), Vegetated Wetlands, Buffer Zones, Filter Strips, and listed species habitat. Wildlife habitat overstory removals have been identified within the footprint of the Civilian Conservation Corps camp on Savoy Mountain State Forest, the homesite located near the intersection of Florida Road and Burnett Road, and the apple orchard directly south of the homesite.

Exotic and offsite species plantations have been identified on the State Forest and are targeted for removals based on the recommendations provided during the Forests as Climate Solutions process. Those species are exotic Norway spruce *(Picea abies)* and offsite red pine *(Pinus resinosa)*.

Existing Conditions

Savoy Mountain State Forest has abundant natural resources including numerous bordering vegetated wetlands, multiple wetland systems, eight vernal pools, five potential vernal pools, woodlands, meadows, four large ponds, many perennial brooks, and several intermittent streams supporting two major forested ecosystems: Spruce-Fir and Northern Hardwood. The Spruce-Fir system is considered vulnerable to climate change and is imperiled under future climate scenarios. There is a very diverse population of reptiles, amphibians, birds, and mammals that this project is intended to directly support. This relatively undeveloped forest provides important protection to water quality and flood storage capacity within the Hoosic watershed with its extensive wetlands and open space.

The State Forest contains significant cultural and historic resources within a matrix of naturalized and managed areas that contain a diverse assemblage of habitat types. These habitat types include northern hardwood forest, spruce-fir forest, forested wetlands, and large wetland systems.

Invasive species are the most immediate threat to the State Forest's systems of habitats and resource areas. This includes emerald ash borer, beech leaf disease, beech bark disease complex, and exotic plants. Invasive plant species greatly reduce biodiversity in these systems by developing aggressive monocultures that outcompete native plants and animals. Additionally, species such as garlic mustard degrade soil composition by severely disrupting the soil mycorrhiza which are a symbiotic relationship that many plants depend on. Invasive species also reduce the integrity of these systems by changing the plant species' composition and structure. The current level of invasion in the State Forest is considered low to moderate with a strong possibility of maintenance activities, as opposed

to larger restoration projects, achieving success in minimizing the degradation associated with invasive plant infestations in most areas. The infestations that require restoration are small enough to be effectively treated and controlled. The exotic vegetation on the State Forest is likely a result from direct anthropogenic influences including the site's past development, infrastructure maintenance activities, and wildlife deposition. Altered hydrology resulting from the property's dams and surrounding roadway system, and previous recreational development and management. It is likely that some of these invasive plants were purposefully planted for medicinal use, landscaping, and/or food.

A brief description of the State Forest's habitats and resource areas within the identified project areas are provided below.

Northern Hardwood Forest

Located in all the Management Zones this natural community is generally characterized by predominantly deciduous trees with scattered hemlocks, white pines, balsam fir *(Abies balsamea)*, and red spruce *(Picea rubens)* but may have internal patches of nearly pure conifers. Canopies include variable combinations of sugar maple *(Acer saccharum)*, white ash *(Fraxinus americana)*, yellow birch *(Betula alleghaniensis)*, American beech *(Fagus grandifolia)*, black cherry *(Prunus serotina)*, red oak *(Quercus rubra)*, eastern hemlock *(Tsuga canadensis)*, and white pine *(Pinus strobus)*. There are often scattered red maple *(Acer rubrum)*, paper birch *(Betula papyrifera)*, and aspen *(Populus tremuloides)*. The shrub layer is usually open but often has scattered clumps of hobblebush *(Viburnum lantanoides)*, striped maple *(Acer pensylvanicum)* , and red-berry elderberry *(Sambucus racemosa)*. The herbaceous layer is sparse, but diverse, with intermediate wood fern *(Dryopteris intermedia)*, Christmas fern *(Polystichum acrostichoides)*, clubmosses *(Dendrolycopodium, Diphasiastrum, Huperzia, and Lycopodium spp.)*, and Canada mayflower *(Maianthemum canadense)*. There are number of subtypes of northern hardwood forest, for example Eastern Hemlock- Northern Hardwood forests are those forests where Eastern Hemlock makes up more than 35% of the total species composition.

Spruce-Fir Forest

The canopies of Spruce - Fir - Northern Hardwoods Forests have variable dominance of 25% to 75% conifers, and the inverse tree composition of northern hardwoods: red spruce and/or balsam fir with eastern hemlock may be dominant or co-dominant with sugar maple and American beech. Eastern hemlock can be abundant or scattered. Paper birch usually occurs as scattered individuals. Characteristic shrubs include mountain maple *(Acer spicatum)*, red-berry elderberry, northern mountain ash *(Sorbus americana)*, and

hobblebush. A low shrub layer may have bunchberry *(Chamaepericlymenum canadense)*, and creeping snowberry *(Gaultheria hispidula)*. Herbs tend to be sparse, especially when conifers are abundant. Spruce-Fir systems are vulnerable under future climate scenarios because they thrive under conditions that provide cool, moist summers and very cold winters. This is the second smallest forested ecosystem in Massachusetts after pitch pine barons and occurs in all 4 Management zones.

Forested Wetlands

Forested wetlands are not all mapped and occur in many areas of the State Forest. The forested wetlands occur within bands of forest on both sides of ephemeral and perennial streams, and as part of isolated wetlands in both the northern hardwood and spruce-fir forest ecosystems. Forested wetlands may also occur in low depressions with high water tables and along seeps.

The composition of the forested wetlands has a broad range of species based on the type of forested ecosystem, previous land use, position on the landscape, moisture regime, and soils. Common tree species include red maple *(Acer rubrum)*, white ash *(Fraxinus americana)* , balsam fir *(Abies balsamea)*, red spruce *(Picea rubens)*, and eastern hemlock *(Tsuga canadensis)*. Ground cover species include spiraea *(Spiraea sp.)*, arrowwood *(Viburnum dentatum)*, sensitive fern *(Onoclea sensibilis)*, cinnamon fern *(Osmunda cinnamomea)*, jewel weed *(Impatiens capensis)*, stinging nettle *(Urtica dioica)*, and sedges *(Carex spp.)*. Forested wetlands occur in all the management zones.

Marsh

A large emergent marsh habitat is present within the central portion of Management zone 1, and many other areas of the forest. Emergent marsh habitats are dominated by patches of cattail, common reed, and quaking aspen *(Populus tremuloides)*.

Vernal Pools

According to MassGIS, there are no vernal pools located in any of the project areas. Most of the vernal pools within the State Forest have been certified using the obligate species criteria.

Human Altered Areas

The identified areas in Management Zone 1 have sites exhibiting both upland and wetland areas occurring within very close proximity without any well-defined ecotones. These areas are shaped by past human activities and are common on sites with a history of agriculture, urbanization, and resource extraction. The sites identified for habitat management in wetlands exhibit areas of uplands immediately adjacent to wetlands with

minimal ecotones, and remnants of borrow pits, trash mounds, dirt piles, ditching, etc. The wetland and upland complex is compromised, and artificial, due to the human activities associated with the sites.

Priority and Estimated Habitat

3 of the 4 Management Zones are located within or in close proximity to Priority Habitat.

Cultural Resource Protection and Management Activities

Preservation measures such as the removal of vegetation from the central portions of foundations and cellar holes may be pursued during management activities. Other activities recommended by the DCR Archeologist will also be integrated into the planning and execution of management activities as appropriate. All Best Management Practices for Archeological Features will be observed, and can be found at the following: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/best-management-practices-dcr .

Project Habitat Management in Wetlands Activities

Ecological Restoration, Wildlife Habitat Improvement, Mitigate Hard Mast Losses Due to Beech Leaf Disease by Increasing Soft Mast Availability.

DCR proposes to reduce and control invasive plant species within 4 Management Zones where the DCR has determined that these species are present and detrimental to the ecological integrity of the natural communities at the site. The management goals include reducing competition with the native vegetation associated with the wetland resource areas and forested habitats, improving hydrology, and improving overall wildlife habitat. The DCR also proposes to conduct habitat management in wetlands on 37 acres of significantly human altered areas to increase soft masting opportunities by increasing light to the forest floor to encourage recruitment and simultaneously releasing numerous soft mast species such as black cherry, pin cherry, service berry, hawthorn, and apple trees.

Project Habitat Management in Wetlands Activities- Ecological Restoration

Invasive and Exotic Plant Management

Invasive Species Management will occur as funds are available, and all efforts will be made to pretreat these areas ahead of harvesting, mowing, and TSI activities. See Appendix A for invasive management and habitat management maps. Herbicide management and mechanical management techniques will be implemented as appropriate. Specific details associated with the invasive management techniques are explained in Appendix B. Wetland avoidance, protection and minimization techniques are explained in the Minimization and Resource Protection section of this filing.

DCR proposes implementing the following invasive management at the identified priority locations located within the State Forest:

Management Zone 1

Forest Management Project Name: Apple Tree Project

Core of the Project Area Location: The intersection of Burnett Road and New State Road

Area – Approximately 100 acres

Management Zone 2

Forest Management Project Name: Burnett Pond Project

Core of the Project Area Location: Burnett Pond Parking Area

Area – Approximately 70 acres

Management Zone 3

Forest Management Project Name: Halfway Project

Core of the Project Area – Between New State Road and Tower Road

Size – Approximately 90 Acres

Management Zone 4

Forest Management Project Name: Liberty Project

Core of the Project Area: Between Chickley River and Haskins Road on Bannis Road

Size – Approximately 140 Acres

Treatments to be Conducted in all Management Zones:

Invasive/ Exotic Plant	Management Technique	Time of Year	WPA Resource Area/ Buffer
Japanese Barberry	Foliar herbicide treatment	Summer application	100-foot Buffer Zone to BVW 200-ft Riverfront Area of Perennial Stream 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank
Asiatic Bittersweet	Foliar spray and/or cut stem/sponge tipped dauber	Summer application	100-foot Buffer Zone to BVW 200-ft Riverfront Area of Perennial Stream 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank
Multiflora Rose	Foliar spray	Summer Application	100-foot Buffer Zone to BVW 200-ft Riverfront Area of Perennial Stream 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank
Honeysuckle	Foliar spray and/or cut stump	Summer Application	100-foot Buffer Zone to BVW 200-ft Riverfront Area of Perennial Stream 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank
Norway Maple	Cut stump	Summer application	100-foot Buffer Zone to BVW 200-ft Riverfront Area of Perennial Stream 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank
Garlic Mustard	Foliar	Spring/Early summer application	100-foot Buffer Zone to BVW 200-ft Riverfront Area of Perennial Stream 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank
Norway Spruce	Mechanical	Winter	100-foot Buffer Zone to BVW 200-ft Riverfront Area of Perennial Stream 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank
Other Invasives as identified	Foliar/cut stump	Summer application	100-foot Buffer Zone to BVW 200-ft Riverfront Area of Perennial Stream 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank

Management for Habitat Enhancement

There are 3 potential wetland areas that exhibit significant Human Alteration and are proposed to be managed to enhance wildlife habitat and increase diversity and complexity on the landscape. These areas are a degraded mottled complex of uplands and wetlands with little chance of being returned to their original system or configuration, if it could even be reasonably determined. The mixing of the soil horizons have resulted in a site with soils that are heavy, but not rich. There are signs of significant and ecologically disruptive past uses with the presence of excavation sites, dumps, apple orchards, foundations and ditching. During the data collection and analysis phase the average tree diameter recorded in these areas was 11.4" at breast height, with 23% of the trees exhibiting characteristics of acceptable growing stock. By way of comparison, a similar site (cover type, age, soils, etc.) on the State Forest without significant human alteration should have trees with an average diameter of 16"- 18" with over 50% of the trees classified as acceptable growing stock.

The probability of this site producing high quality forest with old growth characteristics is near zero based on the damage done, and the damage that is continuing to occur. Ongoing damage is related to major disruptions to natural disturbance processes such as flood control via culverts and beaver eradication, climate change, infrastructure providing continued pathways for invasive species, etc. However, these areas have shown excellent potential to support numerous species of ground cover vegetation, shrubs, and trees that thrive on degraded and/or low nutrient sites such as quaking aspen, white birch, balsam fir, choke cherry *(Prunus virginiana)*, pin cherry *(Prunus pensylvanica)*, red spruce, and many others presenting an excellent opportunity to manage for high quality wildlife habitat. Specifically, buds from quaking aspen and the fruits of: pin cherries, choke cherries, black cherries *(Prunus serotina)*, wild apples *(Malus sp.)*, serviceberry *(Amelanchier sp.),* hawthorn *(Crataegus sp.)*, mountain ash *(Sorbus sp.)*, blackberries and raspberries *(Rubus sp.)*, dogwood *(Cornus sp.)*, blueberries, elderberries *(Sambucus sp.)*, etc. represent important soft mast opportunities that will become critical in the face of beech leaf disease. The 3 primary hard mast species in the forests of New England are/were oak, chestnut, and beech. Chestnuts are reproductively extinct, and the beech leaf disease is anticipated to have severe impacts on the beech population leaving oak as the last of the primary hard mast species in Massachusetts. This will shift wildlife to increasingly rely on soft mast for their survival. Due to the time required for managed areas to stage of maturity that soft mast is produced, and the rate at which beech are declining, the window for proactive management is closing. For example, beech infected with beech leaf disease generally die within 2 to 6 years with larger and healthier specimens lasting up to 10 years. However, it takes 3 to 5 years for a tree such as choke cherry to start producing fruit.

Additionally, mast producing species provide exceptional pollinator habitat as well as the herbaceous plants that emerge when in full sunlight. This is especially important for certain parasitic and predatory insects. For example, the parasitic wasps that prey on the emerald ash borer require flowers with specific characteristics that facilitate feeding while being in close proximity to the ash trees that are under attack. The higher the diversity of flowering species present on a site, the higher the probabilities for flowers with suitable structures and flowering at different times of the year will occur.

A DCR research project has been proposed to study wetland responses under different management regimes with the purpose of identifying techniques that will improve wetland productivity using various metrics such as biological soil activity, use by obligate wildlife and arthropods, use by non-obligate wildlife and arthropods, species richness, species diversity, etc. Within the 12-acre area of the CCC camp, the 9-acre homesite area, and the 16-acre apple orchard area overstory removals focused on aspen reproduction and releasing the shrub layer, with varying sizes of retention areas based on species present or desired will be installed. Species favored for retention include serviceberry, white birch, red oak, black cherry, choke cherry, pin cherry, apple trees, balsam fir, red spruce, hawthorn, and mountain ash. Opening the canopy will encourage additional recruitment from the seedbank. There will be a control area with similar forest types, similar size areas, and no management, using the same metrics as the study area as a basis of comparison.

Habitat management associated with the CCC area, the homesite area, and the apple orchard will follow the harvesting guidelines in the Massachusetts Forestry Best Management Practices Manual, 2013 second edition (Forestry BMP's) as follows:

- For all forest harvesting activities that take place within 100 feet of a wetland resource area or 100 feet from a perennial stream, obtain a permit issued either by the local conservation commission or an approved forest cutting plan.
- Accurately show and label on the forest cutting plan map wetlands that will be crossed, harvested, or lie adjacent to any harvesting activity. The location of a crossing must be identified on the ground with paint or flagging at the time the cutting plan is filed, prior to any harvest activity.
- Only temporary skid trails, truck roads, and crossings may be permitted under an approved forest cutting plan.
- Only operate in wetlands if they are dry, frozen, or otherwise stable enough to carry the equipment without damage through the use of brush, corduroy, or bog bridges to minimize ground pressure and rutting, or the operation is approved by the service forester, after showing that it will help avoid significant environmental damage.

- If the location or method of crossing a wetland crossing needs to change during the operation, have the service forester approve the change before it is made.

Additionally, within Norway spruce and red pine plantations that contain filter strips, the following will comply to Forestry BMP's :

- Filter strips will extend 50 feet back from the bank, measured along the slope.
- No logging equipment may operate in a filter strip unless it is included in an approved forest cutting plan.

Finer mapping of wetland detail will occur prior to all invasive or exotic species herbicide treatments in all project areas.

Resource Area Impacts by Management Zone

Management Zone 1

Resource Area	**Approximate Size of Proposed Alteration/Replacement In Situ**
BVW w/ Human Alteration Areas	1,611,720 Square Feet or 37 Acres
BVW w/out Human Alteration Areas	304,920 or 7 Acres
Bank	4,451 Linear Feet
200-ft Riverfront Area	752,192 Square Feet or 17 Acres

Management Zone 2

Resource Area	**Approximate Size of Proposed Alteration/Replacement In Situ**
BVW	51,415 Square Feet or 1.18 Acres
Bank	4,594 Linear Feet
200-ft Riverfront Area	920,344 Square Feet or 21 Acres

Management Zone 3

Resource Area	**Approximate Size of Proposed Alteration/Replacement In Situ**
BVW	30,253 Square Feet or 0.69 acres
Bank	7,016 Linear Feet
200-ft Riverfront Area	1,771,987 Square Feet or 41 Acres

Management Zone 4

Resource Area	Approximate Size of Proposed Alteration/Replacement In Situ
Bank	3,222 Linear Feet
200-ft Riverfront Area	665,008 Square Feet or 15 Acres

Resource Areas and Interests of the WPA

Invasive species management will occur within Bank, Bordering Vegetative Wetland, , and associated Buffer Zones. Resource area data was compiled and is depicted in Appendix 1 using the following data layers available through MassGIS; MassDEP Wetlands (2005 and MassDEP Hydrography (1:25,000), potential and certified vernal pools, as well as onsite delineation. Resource areas presumption of significance and applicable performance standards are cited and discussed below in relation to work as proposed in this Plan.

Reducing the abundance of invasive species will not adversely affect wildlife habitat and will not negatively impact other interests of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. No significant negative alteration to wetland resources areas will occur as a result of the proposed habitat management program.

As a requirement of all contracts associated with projects conducted on lands managed by the DCR Management Forestry Program, all equipment used on a site for either invasive plant control, harvesting, and/or mowing activities are required to be in good working order; free of any leaks, compromised hoses, or fittings; and clean prior to entering the site. Additionally, there is no parking or storage of equipment in or around resource areas. Finally, due to the relative size of the resource areas in relation to the equipment and personnel used, operations are expected to move rapidly with minimal residence times within the resource areas.

Impacts of the Proposed Management Plan Specific to the Wetlands Protection Act:

- Protection of public and private water supply – According to MassGIS there are no public or private water supplies in or around the proposed Management Zones. Regardless, applicators will only use herbicides and surfactants approved for use in Massachusetts, and all herbicide use must comply with labeled instructions. Only herbicides and surfactants labeled for use in wetlands may be used in wetland resource

areas. Herbicide labels and safety data sheets will be reviewed to comply with all regulations. Applicators will use the appropriate management technique(s) to avoid negative impacts from the herbicide use, such as non-target species killed. All heavy equipment operating within the resource areas are required to have spill kits, and spill cards listing the contacts and phone numbers to be notified in the event of a spill.

- Protection of groundwater supply – According to available studies, there is no reason to believe that the groundwater supply will be adversely impacted by the proposed management strategies, specifically the application of the chemicals at the proposed rates to invasive plants in the State Forest or the tree removal activities. Only herbicides and surfactants labeled for use in wetlands may be used in wetland resource areas. Contamination of groundwater by the proposed herbicides is limited by their low rate of application, rapid rate of degradation, and uptake by target plants. Contamination of groundwater by a spill associated with heavy equipment is limited due to spill kit requirements and the obligation of the contractors to finance any and all cleanup associated with a spill. Contracted licensed applicators and licensed loggers shall take all necessary precautions when handling chemicals and chemical containers. In addition, Contractors will use the appropriate management technique(s) which will ensure the avoidance of any potential impact from the herbicide use or fluid handling.

- Flood control and storm damage prevention – No construction, dredging or alterations of the existing floodplain and storm damage prevention characteristics are proposed. However, in some instances, abundant and excessive plant growth can contribute to high water and flooding. Therefore, the proposed management approaches may increase the capacity of the resource area over the long term to provide flood protection.

- Prevention of pollution – No degradation of water quality or increased pollution is expected by the proposed management approaches. Applicators will only use herbicides and surfactants approved for use in Massachusetts, and all herbicide use must comply with labeled instructions. Only herbicides and surfactants labeled for use in wetlands may be used in wetland resource areas. Herbicide labels and safety data sheets will be reviewed to comply with all regulations. All herbicide applicators and harvesting contractors will apply spill kits and properly dispose of all hazardous chemicals for the prevention of pollution.

- Protection of fisheries and shellfisheries – Applicators will only use herbicides and surfactants approved for use in Massachusetts, and all herbicide use must comply with labeled instructions. Only herbicides and surfactants labeled for use in wetlands may be used in wetland resource areas. Herbicide labels and safety data sheets will be reviewed to

comply with all regulations. Applicators will review labels and safety data sheets to select herbicides that will avoid negative impacts to fishery resources.

- Protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat – In general, non-native plants provide poor wildlife habitat. The proposed management plan is expected to help prevent further degradation of the State Forest's natural systems associated with noxious weed growth and utilize proven management techniques to improve the wildlife habitat value in both the short and long-term. When applying herbicides Applicators will only use herbicides and surfactants approved for use in Massachusetts, and all herbicide use must comply with labeled instructions. Only herbicides and surfactants labeled for use in wetlands may be used in wetland resource areas. Herbicide labels and safety data sheets will be reviewed to comply with all regulations. Applicators will review labels and safety data sheets to select herbicides that will avoid negative impacts on wildlife resources.

Resource Areas, Performance Standards and Project Activities:

Buffer Zones – 310 CMR 10.53

Invasive species control and mechanical treatments within Buffer Zones or Filter Strips of Bank and Bordering Vegetated Wetlands will not adversely impact these Areas Subject to Protection under M.G.L. c. 131 § 40 or significantly alter their character or capacity to provide protection to the Resource Areas described above.

Bank – 310 CMR 10.54

The proposed work will not alter the physical characteristics or stability of the Bank, nor the carrying capacity of the existing channel, and should improve its capacity to provide breeding habitat, escape cover, and additional wildlife habitat functions by giving the opportunity for native vegetation to reestablish in the place of non-native invasive plants. Invasive management within Bank will be limited to the mechanical removal of Norway spruce and red pine with chemical treatment of dispersed and low-density exotic vegetation. The mechanical treatments of Norway spruce and red pine will be performed by severing the trunk of the tree between ground level and 18" above the ground, dependent on growth patterns, either by chainsaw or mechanized logging head attached to an approximately 40' arm. The trees root system will remain intact and operations will be performed under extremely dry or frozen conditions to minimize soil disturbance and/or rutting. Trees felled by chainsaw will be winched from the bank area. Trees felled by

mechanized logging heads are placed outside of the bank area by the equipment. Pulling or weed wrenching will not be performed in Bank areas.

Bordering Vegetated Wetlands – 310 CMR 10.55

Control of invasive plants within Bordering Vegetated Wetlands will not interfere with the resource area's ability to provide the functions presumed significant in 310 CMR 10.55(1). The purpose of this work is to enhance the functioning of naturalized areas within the State Forest by reducing competition from invasive species. Alterations to BVW will be temporary in that ongoing control of multiflora rose, Japanese barberry, Asiatic bittersweet, and shrub honeysuckle within the BVW will ensure replacement in-situ through the proliferation and growth of native plants. Soil disturbance is not expected from the proposed invasive plant management activities.

The proposed mechanical management with the Human Altered areas will also not interfere with the resource area's ability to provide the functions presumed significant in 310 CMR 10.55(1). The purpose of that work is to enhance the functioning of naturalized areas within the State Forest by increasing the opportunities for wildlife forage, regenerate critical habitat components, improve species diversity, and improve species richness. Soil disturbance will be minimized by carefully laying out the project and conducting harvesting activities during stable soil conditions such as frozen or very dry.

Riverfront Areas (310 CMR 10.58[4])

(a) "Work shall meet the performance standards for all other resource areas within the RFA
This work complies with the performance standards for all other resource areas within the requirements for Ecological Restoration Limited Projects

(b) "No project may be permitted which will have any adverse effect on rare wetland or upland, vertebrate or invertebrate species. This project is undergoing MESA review and will comply with all requirements stipulated to
protect rare species and their habitat.

(c)1-3 "There must be no practicable and substantially equivalent economic alternative.
This project improves the values and functions of the wetland resource areas, including Riverfront area. Alternatives considered include the scenario where no invasives control is carried out on the site as well as alternatives with lesser efficacy, such as hand-pulling only. These approaches would not achieve the management goals of the Applicant and

would lead to further spread of invasive species throughout the site, including through jurisdictional areas.

(d) "Work, must have no significant adverse impact on the RFA"

There will be no adverse impacts to RA resulting from control of invasives. Multiple functions and values will be improved through this work.

(d)1.a. "At a minimum, a 100-foot wide area of undisturbed vegetation is provided."

While some vegetation treatment and removal is proposed within RA, this work will encourage denser growth of native species and enhance vegetative communities within the inner and outer riparian zones.

(d)1.c. "Proposed work does not impair the capacity of the riverfront area to provide important wildlife habitat functions."

This work will not impair wildlife habitat functions. Invasive species control will enhance habitat for wildlife.

Other RA performance standards do not apply to this project.

Rare Species Habitat and MESA Review

In accordance with the WPA Ecological Habitat Restoration Project Guidelines, proposed invasive plant management activities located within priority and estimated habitat of endangered species has been reviewed by NHESP. According to NHESP, prescribed vegetation management within priority and estimated habitat located within the listed management zones is considered a NHESP Habitat Management Plan exempt under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) (M.G.L. c.131A; 321 C.M.R. 10.15(15)). The goal of the proposed vegetation management within State-listed Species Habitat is to enhance the habitat for the benefit of rare species and the larger natural system. The NHESP September 10, 2025 Determination Letter has been enclosed with this NOI.

Minimization and Resource Protection

In anticipation of the individual invasive management and enhancement activities, DCR will complete the following delineations and assessment:

Wetland Identification and Conservation Commission Notification

Bordering vegetated wetlands and bank located within 200-feet of the proposed work area will be GPS'd and demarcated with flagging prior to herbicide applications if conditioned by the Conservation Commission. Every effort will be made to notify the Conservation Commission at the beginning of each season. However, due to the unpredictable nature of grant funding opportunities the Conservation Commission will be notified as soon as possible regarding potential herbicide work.

The Conservation Commission will be notified in anticipation of work activities commencing within Wetland Resources Areas and Buffer Zones. The notification will include a description of the invasive management action plan and detailed mapping.

Habitat management work described in the Human altered activities will be conducted in conjunction with an approved cutting plan, and the Conservation Commission will be notified prior to the commencement of harvesting activities.

Herbicide Applications

DCR will use herbicides to manage invasive plant species. Herbicides will be applied using multiple techniques depending on the invasive plant and its locations (See Appendix B). Proposed herbicides include Glyphosate with Thinvert RTU as the carrier. These will be applied with a combination of techniques including foliar spray using backpack sprayers and spot applications using sponge tipped daubers and hand wiping.

The following conditions will be followed when applying herbicides:

- Only individuals appropriately licensed and certified by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Pesticide Bureau will be allowed to apply herbicides. Herbicide applications must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. DCR must approve all herbicides and surfactants prior to their application. Herbicides will not be applied during the following adverse weather conditions:
    - High wind velocity, per 333 CMR 11.03(6)
    - Periods of dense fog, or moderate to heavy rainfall
    - When rain is forecast within the 4-hour period after a scheduled application or within 48 hours when applying herbicides within State listed Species Habitat.
- When applying herbicides, the contractor will follow all labeled restrictions. All plant control treatments will follow all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. The

contractor shall provide DCR with copies of any forms/reports filed regarding the herbicide application covered under this contract.

- The contractor shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations controlling pollution of the environment. The contractor shall take necessary precautions to prevent pollution of streams, wetlands, and ponds with fuels, oils, chemicals, or other harmful materials and to prevent pollution of the atmosphere from particulate and gaseous matter.

- The contractor, including employees, shall be properly licensed, certified, and insured to work on Massachusetts state lands.

- The storage or disposal of fuels, oils, chemicals, or other harmful materials on any project sites or neighboring property is strictly prohibited.

- The contractor shall provide DCR a written record (log) of all work done, including herbicide applications showing dates of application, names and license numbers of applicators, volumes, concentrations, and types of herbicide solutions used.

Invasive Species Management Monitoring, Follow Up Treatments and Restoration

Areas that have been treated by either herbicides or mechanically will be routinely visited and evaluated to ensure that the goals and objectives of the activities are met. Continued maintenance treatments for invasive and exotic species is expected.

Alternative Analysis and Conclusion

Alternatives to the proposed Invasive Plant Management Plan were considered. DCR evaluated all available strategies for management of exotic and invasive plant species on the State Forest. The DCR also evaluated the effectiveness of Ch. 132 Forest Cutting Practices Act for opportunities to achieve the desired results in the Altered Human Use areas. Management findings and recommendations included in this plan are based on direct experience completing similar projects on other DCR managed lands as well as scientific literature. The use of biocontrols was researched, and the management within the Altered Human Use are expected to improve the opportunities for parasitic wasps associated with emerald ash borer control. The use of biocontrol specific to the invasive vegetation was explored, however, there are no proven biological controls available or

approved by the State for the control of the invasive species proposed to be managed within the State Forest. Not managing the invasive species is not recommended. Allowing the invasive plants to thrive will continue to degrade wildlife habitat, wetlands, cultural resources, and recreational resources.

As such, DCR respectfully requests that the Conservation Commission find that the proposed invasive plant management/restoration activities and the wildlife habitat management in wetlands meet the criteria of an ecological restoration limited project as set forth by 310 CMR 10.53(4) and issue a Restoration Order of Condition in accordance with 310 CMR 10.13. Due to the nature of the work, DCR requests a five-year Order of Condition.

APPENDIX A

Project Maps and Locations

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Savoy Mountain State Forest Habitat Management in Wetlands and Invasive Species Management Projects – 2022 Savoy Landscape Resiliency Proposal

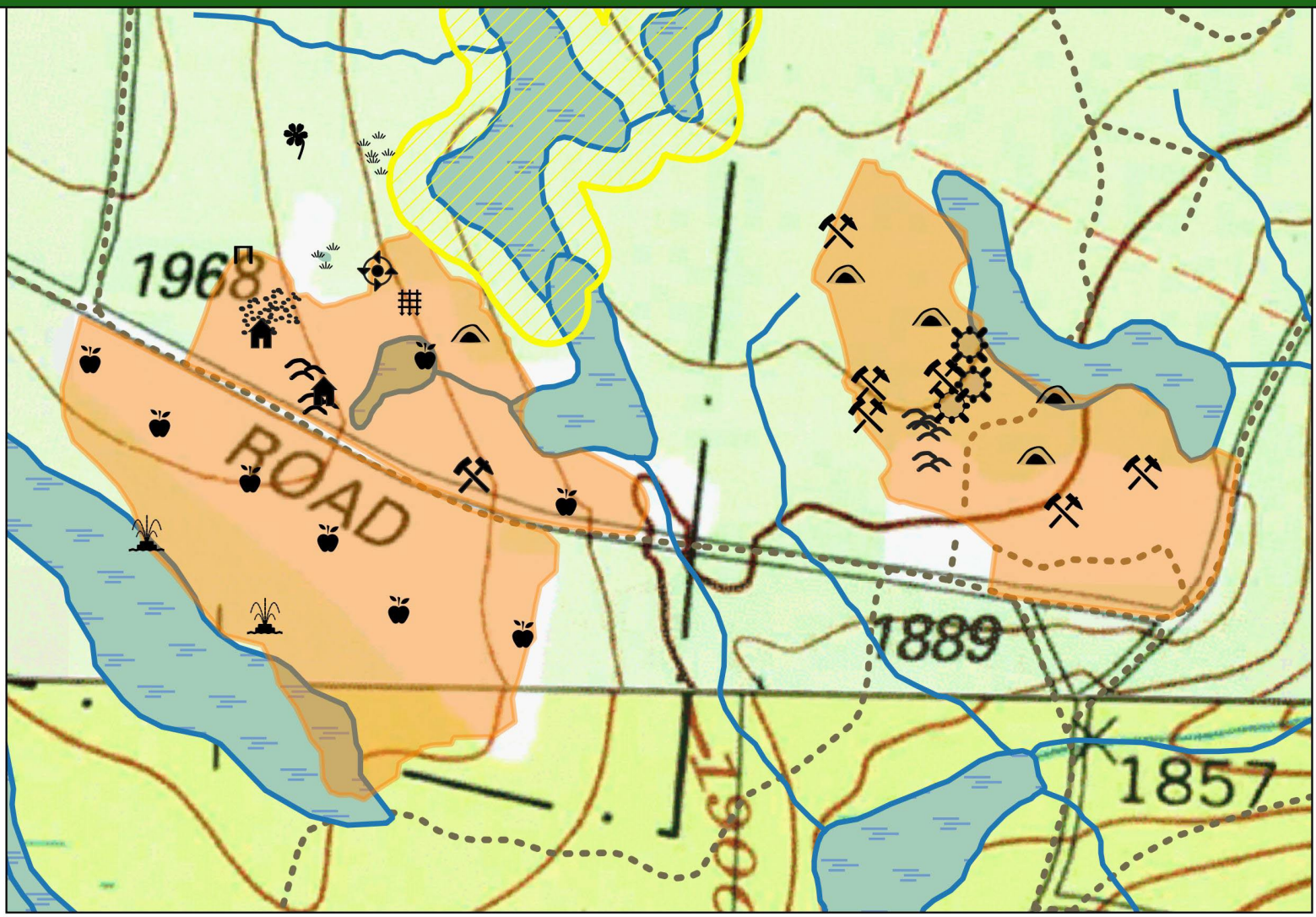
NOTICE OF INTENT

July 2025

Harvesting in Wetlands
within
Human Alteration Areas

Savoy Mountain State Forest

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

- Priority Habitat
- DCR Lands Boundary
- DEP Wetlands
- DEP Streams
- Human Alteration Areas
- Roads and Trails
- Pasture Relic
- Spring/Seep
- Wetland
- Dump
- Apple Orchard
- Fencing
- Culvert and Sheet Metal
- Dirt Pile
- Disturbed Area
- Excavation
- Foundation
- Metal and Debris
- Ditch

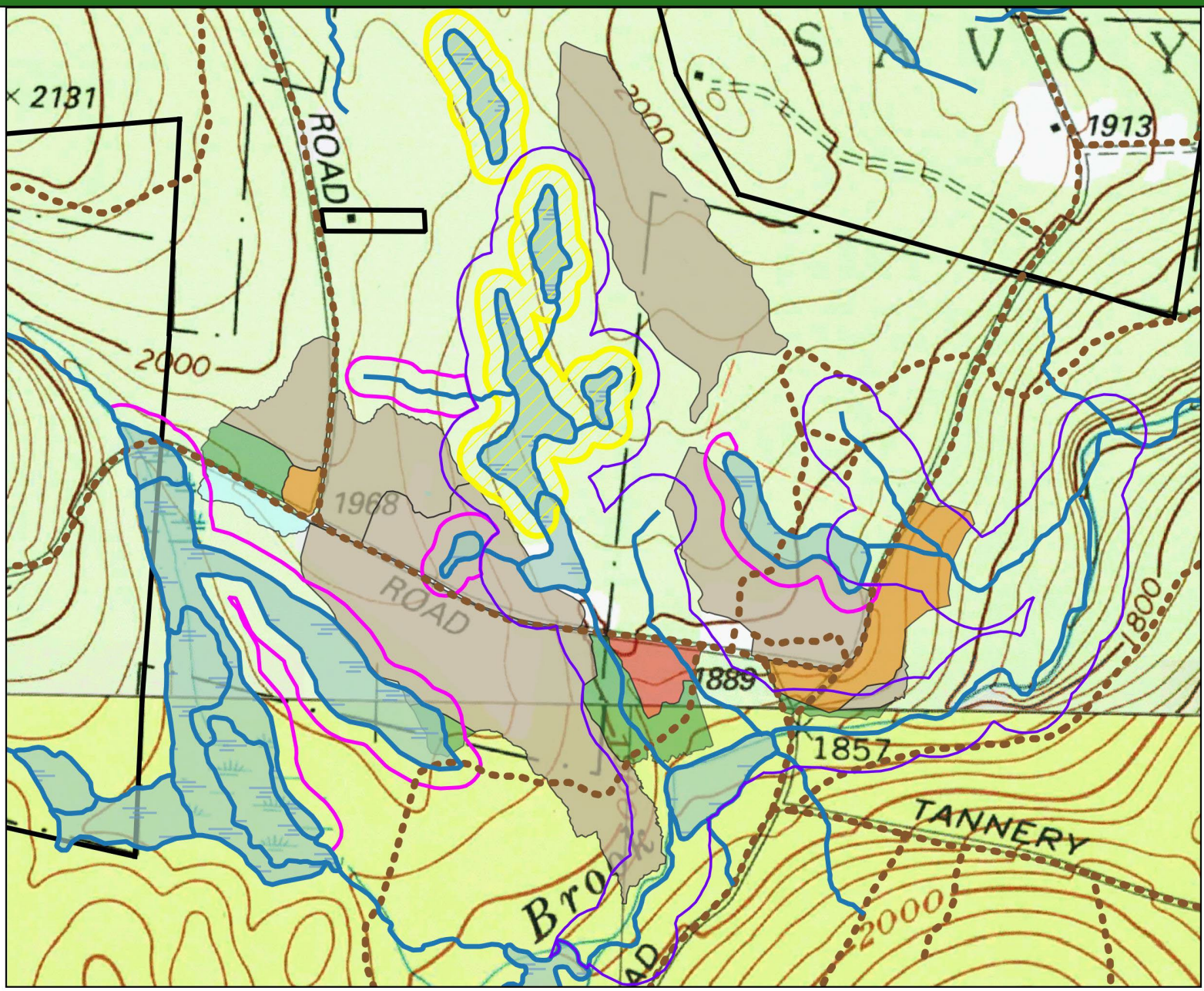
0 200 400 ft

1" = 400'

Savoy Mountatin State Forest

Invasive and Exotic Species Treament Plan
Wetland and Habitat Management Plan
Management Zone 1
Savoy, MA

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

- DEP Streams
- Spruce-Fir Forested Ecosystem
- Red Pine Plantation
- Norway Spruce Plantations
- Red Pine-White Pine Plantation
- Northern Hardwood Forested Ecosystem
- DEP Wetlands
- Priority Habitat
- DCR Lands Boundary
- Roads and Trails
- 100' Buffer
- 200' Buffer

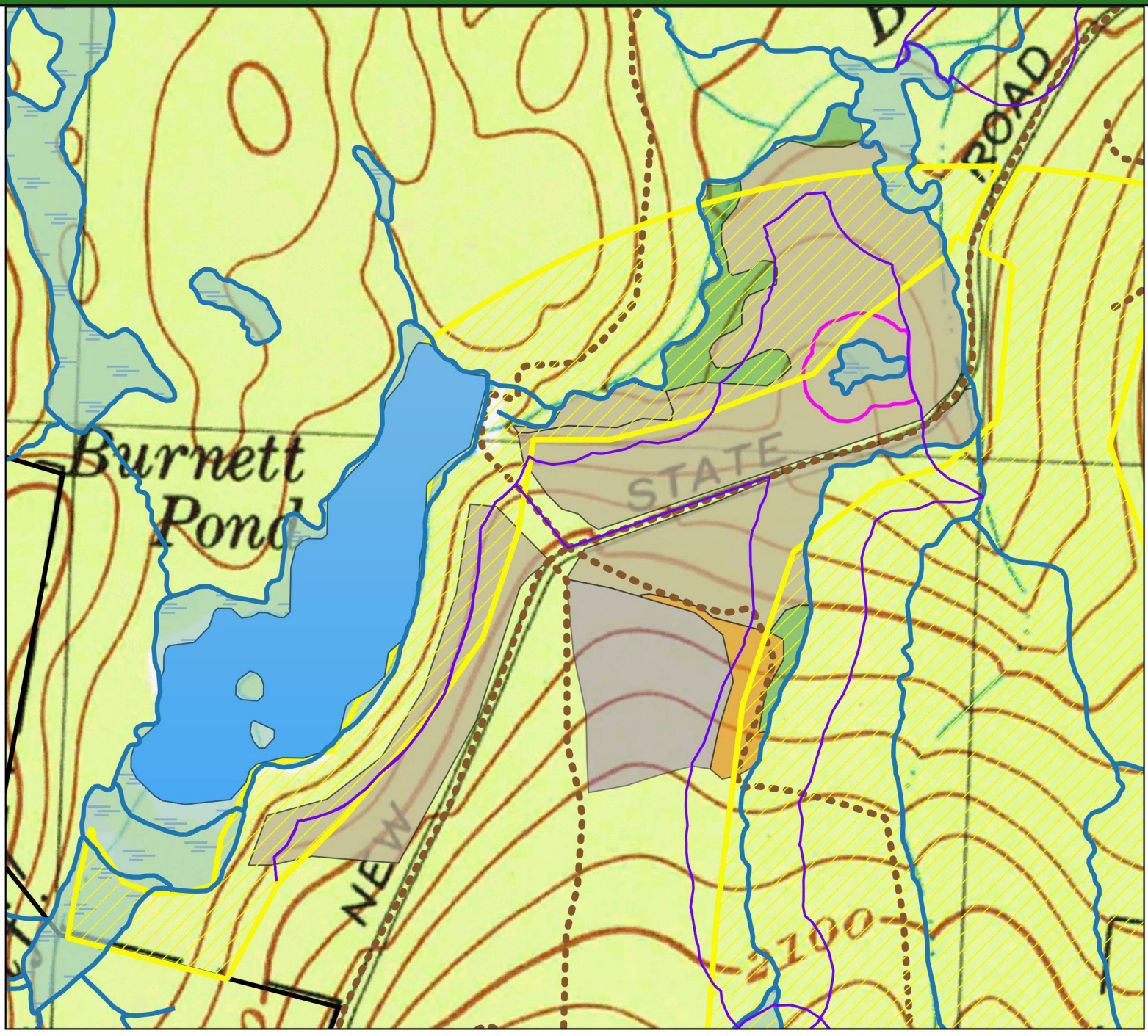
0 375 750 ft

1" = 750'

Savoy Mountatin State Forest

Invasive and Exotic Species Treament Plan
Wetland and Habitat Management Plan
Management Zone 2
Savoy, MA

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

- SURFACE WATER
- Priority Habitat
- DEP Streams
- DEP Wetlands
- Norway Spruce Plantations
- Regenerating Spruce-Northern Hardwoods
- Northern Hardwood Forested Ecosyst
- Spruce-Fir Forested Ecosystem
- DCR Lands Boundary
- Roads and Trails
- 200' Buffer
- 100' Buffer

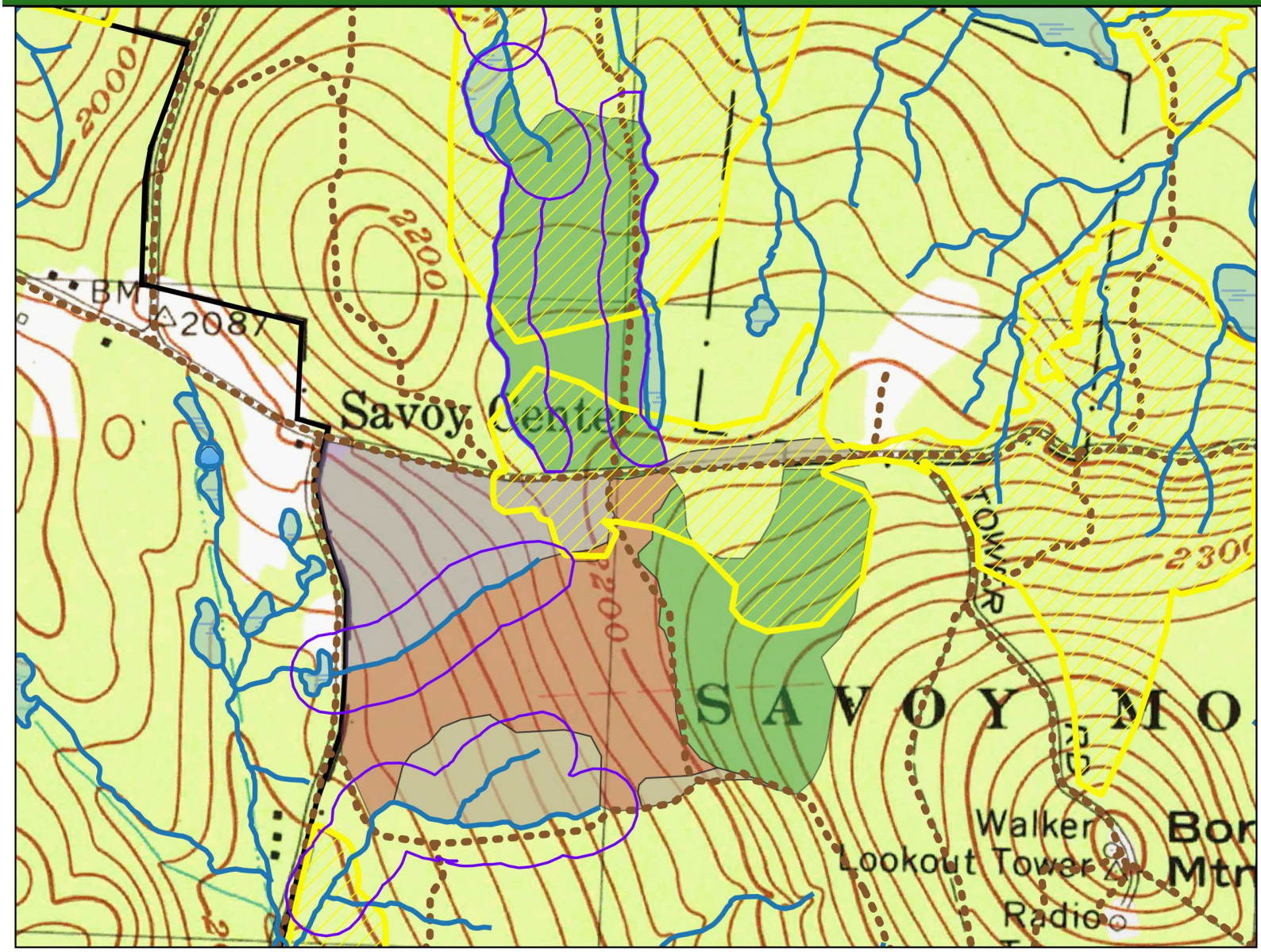
0 250 500 ft

1" = 500'

Savoy Mountatin State Forest

Invasive and Exotic Species Treament Plan
Wetland and Habitat Management Plan
Management Zone 3
Savoy, MA

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

- Eastern Hemlock-Northern Hardwoods Foresteted Ecosystem
- Regenerating Spruce-Northern Hardwoods
- Priority Habitat
- Northern Hardwood Forested Ecosystem
- Spruce-Fir Forested Ecosystem
- DEP Streams
- DEP Wetlands
- DCR Lands Boundary
- Roads and Trails
- 200' Buffer

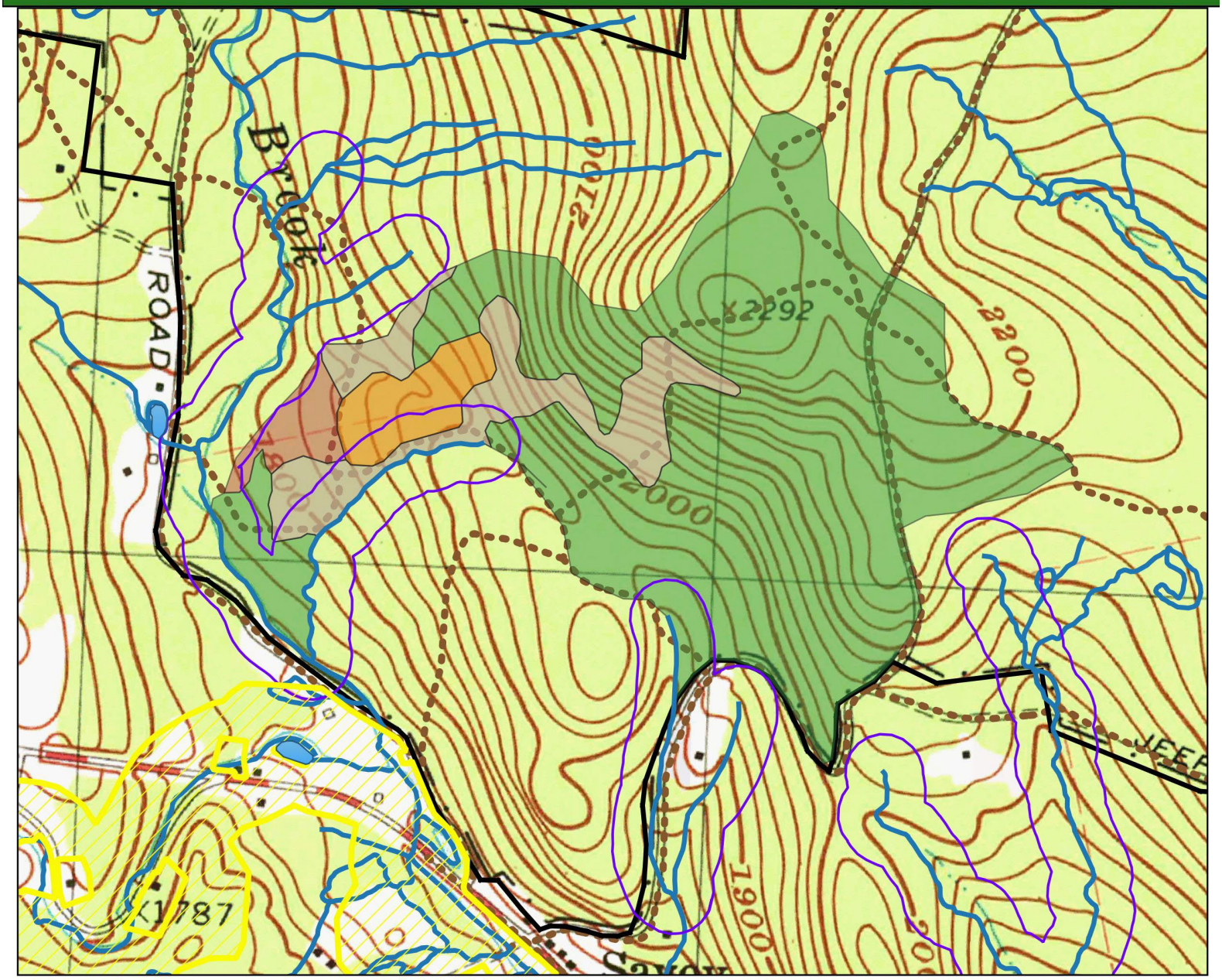
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1" = 750'

Savoy Mountatin State Forest

Invasive and Exotic Species Treament Plan
Wetland and Habitat Management Plan
Management Zone 4
Savoy, MA

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

- Spruce-Fir Forested Ecosystem
- Eastern Hemlock-Northern Hardwoods Foresteted Ecosystem
- Northern Hardwood Forested Ecosystem
- Norway Spruce Plantations
- DCR Lands Boundary
- Priority Habitat
- DEP Streams
- DEP Wetlands
- Roads and Trails
- 200' Buffer

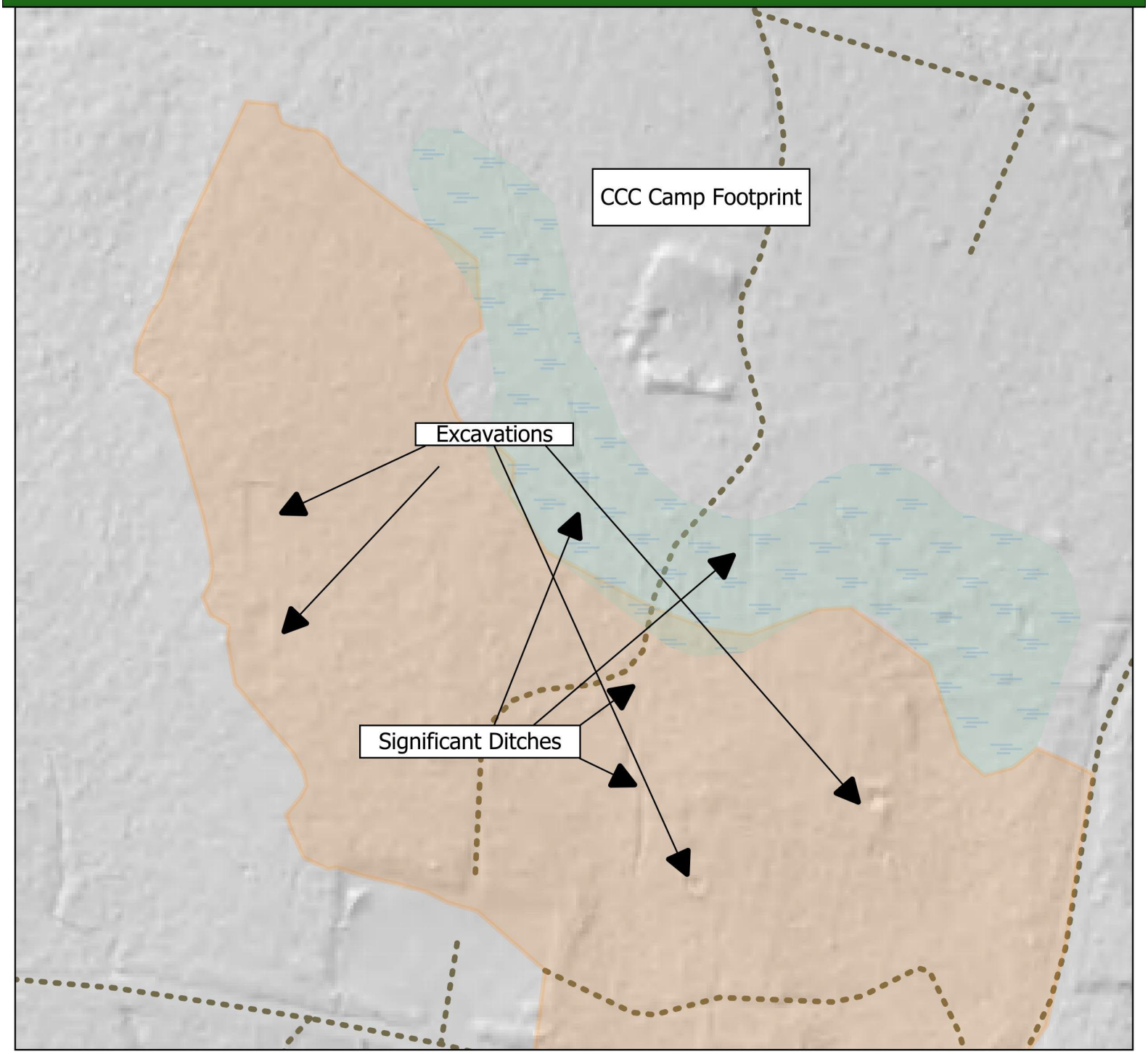
0 375 750 ft

1" = 750'

LiDAR of CCC Camp Area

Savoy Mountain State Forest

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

- Human Alteration Areas
- DEP Wetlands

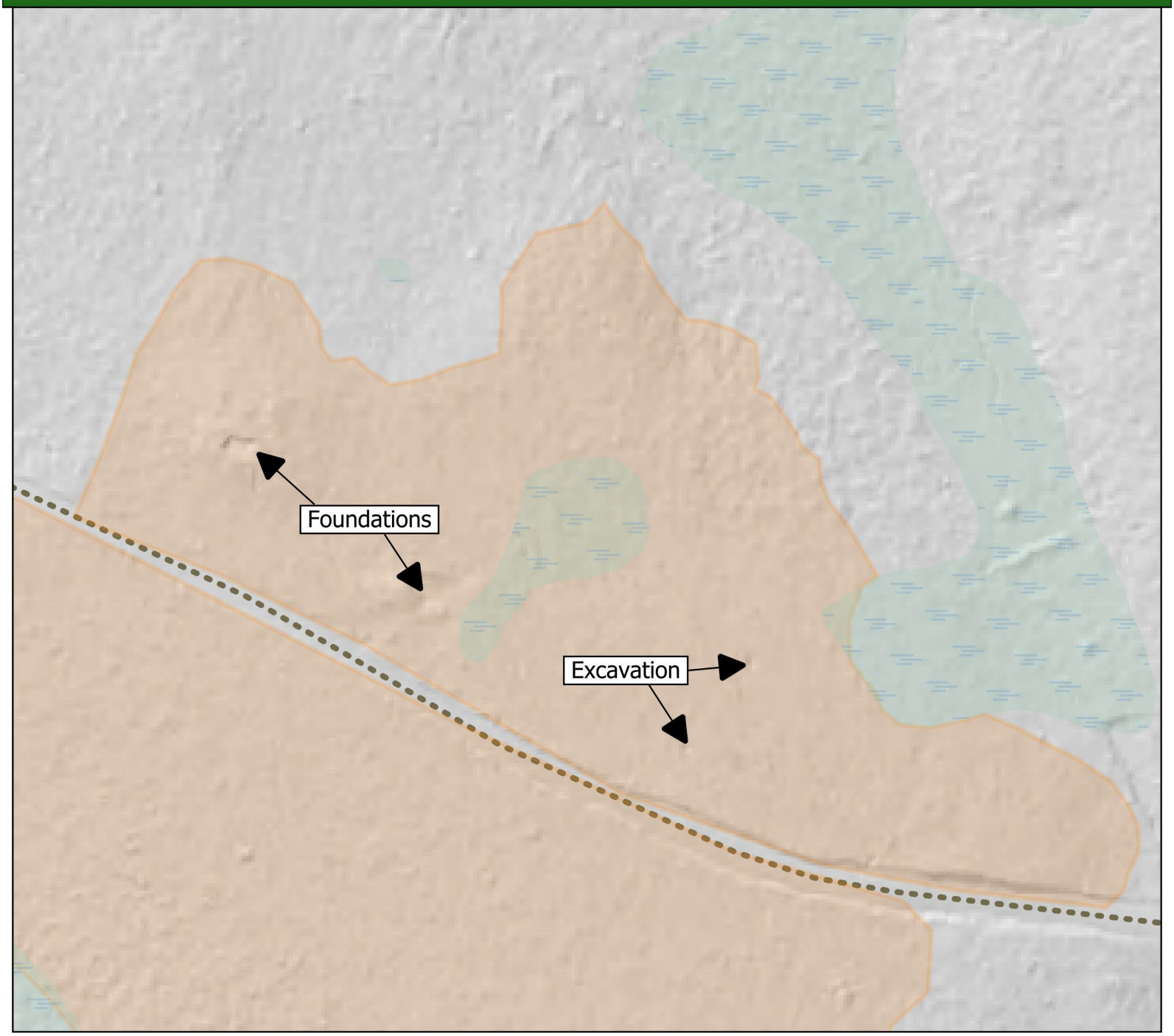
0 75 150 ft

1" = 150'

LiDAR of Homesite Area

Savoy Mountain State Forest

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

- DEP Wetlands
- Human Alteration Areas

0 75 150 ft

1" = 150'

APPENDIX B

Invasive and Exotic Vegetation Management Techniques

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Savoy Mountain State Forest Habitat Management in Wetlands and Invasive Species Management Projects – 2022 Savoy Landscape Resiliency Proposal

NOTICE OF INTENT

July 2025

Invasive Plant Management Techniques

Management of invasive plants will vary depending on the plant type, size, biology, and density throughout the project areas. The DCR will work with contractors and staff to manage invasive plants. Management will include manual, mechanical and chemical techniques.

Manual and Mechanical Management

Manual and mechanical methods (e.g. hand pulling, weed wrenching, cutting) will be employed when feasible, practical, and have a demonstrated pattern of success. Invasive plants that may be managed by manual and mechanical means include garlic mustard as well as yearling Japanese barberry, shrub honeysuckle, glossy buckthorn, Asiatic bittersweet and Japanese knotweed. To limit soil movement, manual removal/hand pulling of invasive plants will not occur within areas with unstable soils and slopes above 3%.

Herbicide Applications

Herbicide will be used in a targeted and judicious manor. Herbicide applications will be employed to manage Asiatic bittersweet, shrub honeysuckle, garlic mustard, multiflora rose, Norway maple, and other invasives as they are located and identified. Herbicides include Glyphosate (Roundup Custom, Rodeo) , with wetland approved deposition aids and carriers or Triclopyr (Garlon 3A. These will be applied with a combination of techniques including foliar spray using backpack sprayers spot applications using sponge tipped daubers, hand wiping, and cut stump.

Foliar spray application (low pressure backpack sprayer)

Backpack treatment consist of a 5% - 7% wetland approved glyphosate and water or surfactant, deposition aid, and/or carrier mixture and will only take place where application to open or standing water is low or non-existent and/or the density of the target plants are high enough to warrant this type of application. For units where invasive plant densities are low to moderate, wetland approved glyphosate will be applied with a 7% solution and wetland deposition aids, carriers, and surfactants. Deposition aids allows more uniform application droplet size, which allows for a more targeted application. Deposition aids also readily sticks to targeted leaf surfaces limiting dripping on non-target plants as would happen with a water application.

Foliar spray application (Mechanically assisted / UTV mounted)

Where exotic invasive plant densities are moderate to high, a high volume, low herbicide application can be made using a 2% solution of wetland approved glyphosate and water with a surfactant. This method covers both sides of the leaves, plus allows penetration to thick stands for a successful treatment. There is little adverse effect if a non-target plant gets hit due to the low percentage of active ingredient in the mix. A full coverage application is the only way treatment is successful. This method of application is done with a mechanically assisted sprayer (a 50-100 gallon tank with motor mounted on a UTV).

Cut stem treatments/ sponge tipped dauber

Typically consists of severing the plant stem and applying directly to the cut stem a mix of wetland approved glyphosate and 50% water mix. The cut stump application is done with a backpack or herbicide dabber. This method will be used for woody invasive plants that are too large/tall to be successfully treated with foliar application. This method may also be used in areas with very low densities of exotic invasive plants or where potential negative impacts on native or sensitive vegetation are high.

Girdling or frilling with herbicide

Using an ax or hatchet, make a horizontal cut or groove (0.5 to 1.5 inches deep and 2 to 8 inches wide) through bark and cambial tissue around the entire circumference of the trunk. The width and depth of the groove should be in proportion to the tree's diameter. Girdling can be done more quickly if a chain saw is used to make two horizontal cuts through the bark that are circumferential around the entire trunk; one cut should be 2 to 4 inches above the other. Frilling is a variation of girdling in which the groove made by an ax or hatchet around the tree still has the partially severed bark and wood attached at the bottom of the groove to allow retention of the applied herbicide. Cut surfaces from girdling or frilling can be sprayed or painted with Triclopyr or Imazapyr until thoroughly wet with a herbicide solution within 5 minutes.

APPENDIX C

Site Photos

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Savoy Mountain State Forest Habitat Management in Wetlands and Invasive Species Management Projects – 2022 Savoy Landscape Resiliency Proposal

NOTICE OF INTENT

July 2025

Habitat Management in Wetlands: Human Alteration Areas – CCC Camp Area



This photo was taken within the CCC Camp Area. Taken from inside the wetland there is very little ecotone between the American beech, an upland tree, and the wetland.



This photo was taken within the CCC Camp Area. This photo shows American beech regeneration, and upland tree, nearly inside of what was delineated as a wetland.



This photo was taken within the CCC Camp Area. Shows a representative image of the dumps that are located on the site.





These photos were taken in the CCC Camp Area. The photos show different ditches located within the area. Ditch A is long, and deep enough to be seen on the LiDAR Maps included in Appendix A.



This photo was taken in the CCC Camp Area. The photos shows an example of an excavation that can be detected on LiDAR. This location is the most northwestern excavation site indicated CCC Cap LiDAR Map. The reason that this excavation is easily identified is because it is rectangular.

Habitat Management in Wetlands: Human Alteration Areas – Homesite Area and Apple Orchard







These phots were taken at the Homesite Area and the Apple Orchard across the street from the Homesite. Pictures A and B are representative examples of the old orchards in the area. Picture C is an example of the ditches that were used for drainage so water would move out of the orchard and downhill into wetlands.



This photo was taken in the Homesite Area and is representative of the foundations identified on the maps.

Appendix D

Abutters Notice

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Savoy Mountain State Forest Habitat Management in Wetlands and Invasive Species Management Projects – 2022 Savoy Landscape Resiliency Proposal

NOTICE OF INTENT

July 2025

NOTIFICATION TO ABUTTERS

Under the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act (to be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the Savoy Conservation Commission when filing a Notice of Intent)

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 131, Section 40, you are hereby notified of the following:

A. Name of Applicant: Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

B. The applicant has filed a Notice of Intent application with the Savoy Conservation Commission seeking approval for an Ecological Restoration Limited Project (Invasive Plant Management) under the Wetland Protection Act (MGL chapter 131, Section 40 and its implementing regulations 310 CMR 10.00)

C. The address of the project location is Savoy Mountain State Forest

D. Copies of the Notice of Intent application can be viewed at the Savoy Conservation Commission Office.

E. Information about the project, and the date and time of the public hearing can be obtained by calling the Savoy Conservation Office at (413) 743-4290.

F. Copies of the Notice of Intent application can be obtained from:

Name and address Kevin Podkowka, DCR kevin.podkwoka@mass.gov

Phone 413-770-6087

Notice of the date, time and location of the public hearing will be posted in the Town Hall and the Conservation Commission's website no less than forty-eight (48) hours before the scheduled public hearing.

You may also contact the Department of Environmental Protection, Western Regional Office at 413-784-1100.

Number on Map	loc_id	map_par	prop_id	site_addr	owner1	own_addr	own_city	own_	own_zi
Management Zone 1									
1	M_73048_932480	UNKNOWN							
2	M_72936_932146	407-7	407-7-0	169 BURNETT RD	HOLLAND JAMES G	PO BOX 255	ADAMS	MA	01220
3	M_73573_932404	402-5	402-5-0	84 FLORIDA RD	PETERSEN SCOTT J	82 HOLMES TER	HANSON	MA	02341
4	M_74149_932626	402-6	402-6-0	148-443 NEW STATE RD	SEBRING J PAUL	20 SCHOOL STREET	TOWNSEND	MA	01469
Management Zone 2									
1	M_73132_930197	407-23	407-23-0	53 NEW STATE RD	REINHARDT JAMIE & SUSA	53 NEW STATE RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
2	M_72965_930218	407-13	407-13-0	0 ADAMS RD	PHILLIPS SCOTT F	15 SPEAR ST	MELROSE	MA	02176
3	M_72814_930290	407-12	407-12-0	742 ADAMS RD	MIX STEPHEN T	742 ADAMS RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
4	M_72804_930419	407-11	407-11-0	0 ADAMS RD	ELLIOTT JON T	PO BOX 353	OTIS	MA	01253
5	M_72808_930595	407-10	407-10-0	0 ADAMS RD	ZUBER, PRISCILLA J G	58 WOODLEIGH RD	PITTSFIELD	MA	01201
Management Zone 3									
1	M_73120_930116	407-22	407-22-0	35 NEW STATE RD	PAUSE CHAD A	35 NEW STATE RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
2	M_73089_930024	407-21	407-21-0	31 NEW STATE RD	REINER ALBERT N	31 NEW STATE RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
3	M_73072_929928	407-20	407-20-0	15 NEW STATE RD	COOPER JAYSON K	15 NEW STATE RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
4	M_73063_929850		407-19-0	658 ADAMS RD	LAGOWSKI RON	658 ADAMS RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
5	M_73262_929777	407-24	407-24-0	622 ADAMS RD	LENSKI JEFFREY J	622 ADAMS RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
6	M_73387_929715	407-25	407-25-0	606 ADAMS RD	LENSKI JAMES F	606 ADAMS RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
7	M_73339_929558	407-1.1	407-1-1	605 ADAMS RD	LENSKI NICHOLAS P	622 ADAMS RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
8	M_73244_929265	407-1	407-1-0	0 ADAMS RD	LENSKI ROBERT	29 CLIFF ST	DALTON	MA	01226
Management Zone 4									
1	M_75062_925606	413-74.1	413-74.1-0	0 HASKINS RD	OWNER UNKNOWN	HASKINS ROAD	Savoy	MA	01256
2	M_75315_925214	413-75	413-75-0	201 HASKINS RD	RYAN BARBARA L	201 HASKINS RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
3	M_74803_925346	413-76	413-76-0	0 HASKINS RD	NELSON JOANIE	3142 SW FAIRVIEW BLVD	PORTLAND	OR	97205
4	M_74759_925441	413-77	413-77-0	301 HASKINS RD	FRAKER SPENCER	301 HASKINS RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
5	M_73943_925582	413-62	413-62-0	47 CENTER RD	DRAWEC DONALD C	47 CENTER RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
6	M_73882_925744	413-63	413-63-0	95 CENTER RD	SUTLIFF TIM	95 CENTER RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
7	M_73820_925843	413-64	413-64-0	103 CENTER RD	MAYNARD BEVERLY A	103 CENTER RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
8	M_73823_925927	413-65	413-65-0	113 CENTER RD	MAYNARD PAUL	103 CENTER RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
9	M_73836_926070	413-66	413-66-0	133 CENTER RD	MAYNARD ALICIA M	133 CENTER RD	SAVOY	MA	01256
10	M_73839_926225	413-67	413-67-0	153 CENTER RD	WESLOWSKI RONALD C	153 CENTER RD	SAVOY	MA	01256

Abutters

Management Zone 1

Savoy Mountain State Forest, Savoy MA

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

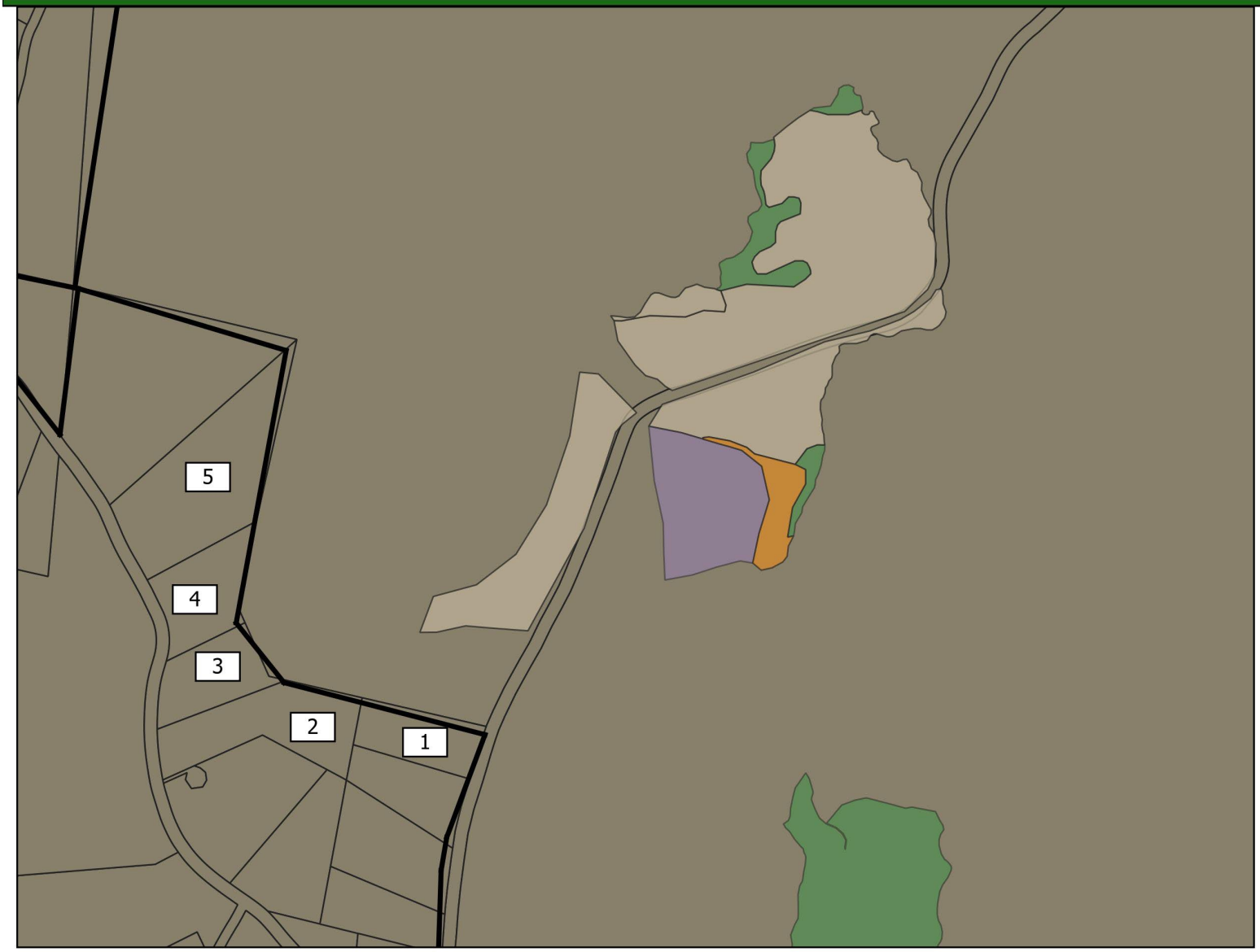
- Human Alteration Areas
- Norway Spruce Plantations
- Northern Hardwood Forested Ecosystem
- Spruce-Fir Forested Ecosystem
- Red Pine Plantation
- Red Pine_White Pine Plantation
- DCR Lands Boundary
- Savoy Tax Parcels

0 500 1,000 ft

1" = 1,000'

Abutters
Management Zone 2
Savoy Mountain State Forest, Savoy MA

dcr Massachusetts



LEGEND

- Norway Spruce Plantations
- Regenerating Spruce-Northern Hardwoods
- Northern Hardwood Forested Ecosystem
- Spruce-Fir Forested Ecosystem
- DCR Lands Boundary
- Savoy Tax Parcels

0 375 750 ft

1" = 750'

Abutters
Management Zone 3
Savoy Mountain State Forest, Savoy MA



LEGEND

- Norway Spruce Plantations
- Regenerating Spruce-Northern Hardwoods
- Northern Hardwood Forested Ecosystem
- Eastern Hemlock-Northern Hardwoods Foresteted Ecosystem
- Spruce-Fir Forested Ecosystem
- DCR Lands Boundary
- Savoy Tax Parcels

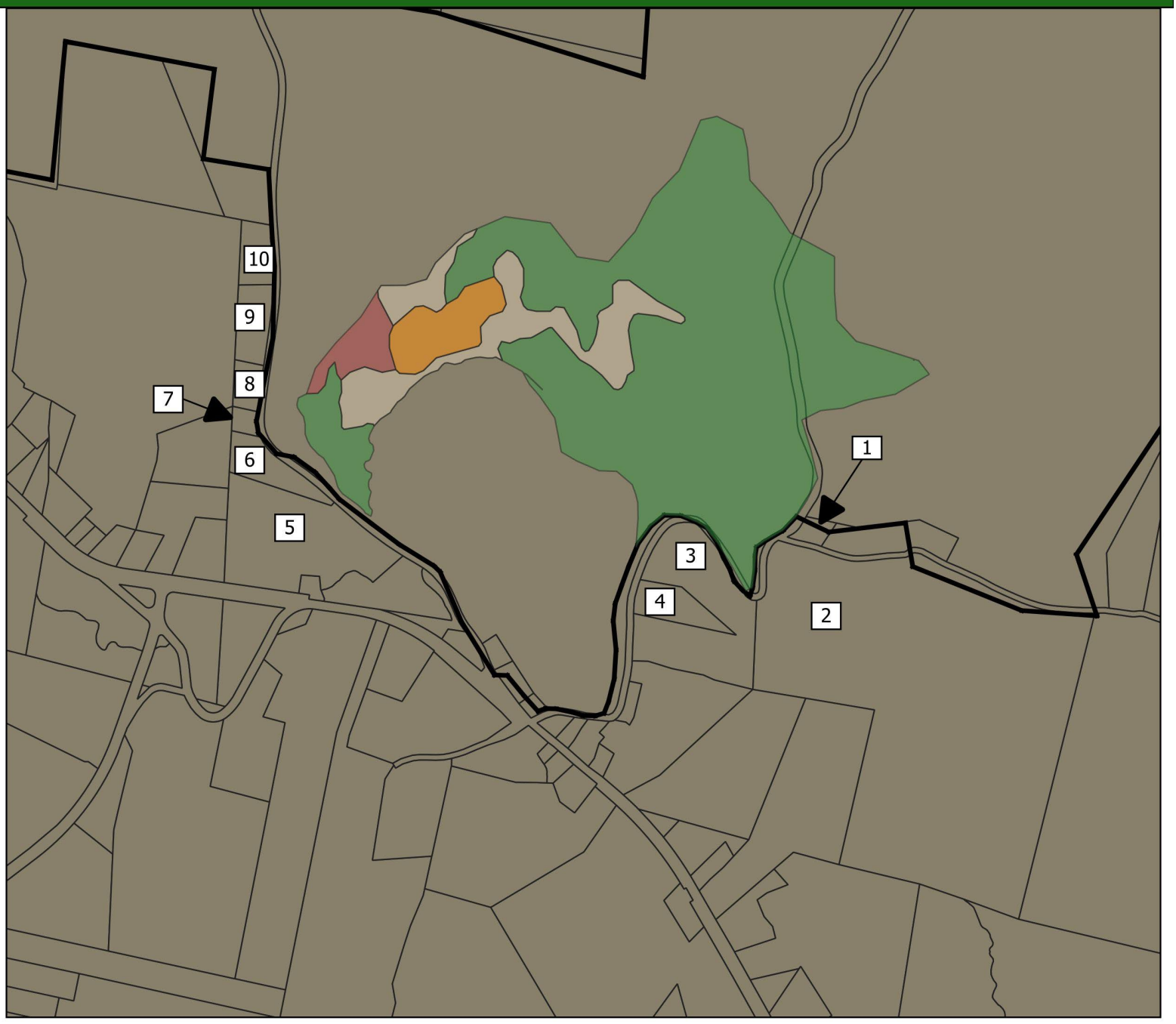
0 375 750 ft

1" = 750'

Abutters

Management Zone 4

Savoy Mountain State Forest, Savoy MA



LEGEND

- Norway Spruce Plantations
- Northern Hardwood Forested Ecosystem
- Eastern Hemlock-Northern Hardwoods Foresteted Ecosystem
- Spruce_Fir Forested Ecosystem
- DCR Lands BOundary
- Savoy Tax Parcels

0 500 1,000 ft

1" = 1,000'

MASSWILDLIFE

DIVISION OF
FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581
p: (508) 389-6300 | f: (508) 389-7890
MASS.GOV/MASSWILDLIFE

September 10, 2025

Kevin Podkowka
740 South Street
PO Box 1433
Pittsfield, MASSACHUSETTS 01202

RE: Project Location: Savoy Mountain State Forest, Savoy, MA
Project Description: Wetland and Habitat Enhancement Projects for Savoy Mountain State Forest
NHESP Tracking No.: 25-19782
Heritage Hub Form ID: RC-95581

Dear Applicant:

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (the "Division") received a request to review the project and plans entitled "MESA HABITAT MANAGEMENT PROJECT" (dated July 2025; the "Plan") and supporting documentation to the for review pursuant to the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) (MGL c.131A) and its implementing regulations (321 CMR 10.00).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project involves invasive plant control, exotic plantation removal, and targeted habitat restoration within four management zones and three degraded wetland/upland sites in Savoy Mountain State Forest.

MA ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

The Plan is approved by the Division provided the following conditions are implemented:

1. Plant Surveys and Avoidance: Prior to the start of work, surveys for American Twinflower (Linnaea borealis), Bartram's Shadbush (Amelanchier bartramiana), and Bailey's Sedge (Carex baileyi) shall be conducted to delineate and avoid impacts to these plant species within all suitable habitats associated the limits of work or access for Management Zones 1, 2, & 3 as well as the Human Alteration Areas identified in Appendix A (the Plan).

a. Botanical field surveys must be conducted by a qualified botanist in appropriate habitats throughout all areas of proposed work and areas within 20 feet of the limit of work, including any access routes or staging areas, using methodologies consistent with the State-listed Species Habitat Assessment And Survey Guidelines: Plants (dated March 2016), see https://www.mass.gov/doc/state-listed-species-habitat-assessment-and-survey-guidelines-plants/download

b. The Division requires pre-approval of the botanist prior to conducting surveys. Please submit a copy of the botanist's resume/curriculum vita for review.

c. The approved botanist shall submit to the Division a time-table and survey protocol for written approval prior to initiation of field work. The survey protocol shall list the specific taxonomic characteristics for definitive identification as well as the characteristics of similar or easily confused species. Surveys should be successful at detecting the target plant in June.

d. If state-listed plants are encountered within the proposed work areas or within 20 feet of the limit of work, the Applicant must provide a detailed protection plan specifiying measures to ensure the project does not result in a Take of state-listed plants to the Division for review and written approval. Please note the protection plan may necessitate additional or subsequent botanical survey work to implement required Take avoidance measures.

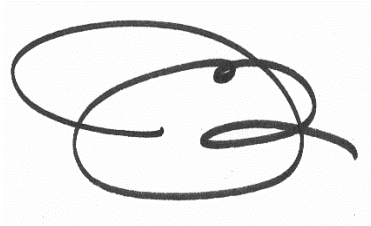
If applicable, any materials submitted to the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) in pursuit of or in compliance with ESA 50 CFR 17.11, shall also be submitted to the Division in writing at the same time they are submitted to USFWS.

Based on a review of the information provided, the Division has determined that the project as proposed in the Plan is exempt pursuant to 321 CMR 10.14 which states: "[t]he following Projects and Activities shall be exempt from the requirements of 321 CMR 10.18 through 10.23…"

(15) the active management of State-listed Species habitat, including but not limited to mowing, cutting, burning, or pruning of vegetation, or removing exotic or invasive species, for the purpose of maintaining or enhancing the habitat for the benefit of rare species, provided that the management is carried out in accordance with a habitat management plan approved in writing by the Division and;

Any changes to the proposed project or any additional work beyond that provided may require a filing with the Division pursuant to the MESA regulations. Please note that this determination addresses only the matter of state-listed species and their habitats. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Melany Cheeseman, Endangered Species Review Assistant, at Melany.Cheeseman@mass.gov, (508) 389-6357.

Sincerely,



Jesse Leddick
Assistant Director

cc: Pricilla Geigis, Department of Conservation and Recreation