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# Trails get cleared

APA approves Frontier Town hiking and horse paths

BY **TIM ROWLAND**

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Photo provided

The new Frontier Town campground will cater to tent campers, equestrians and RVs.

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NORTH HUDSON | [The state received approval from the Adirondack Park Agency](#) last week to proceed with the third phase of a trail system at the redeveloped Frontier Town campground and equestrian center.

The vote was unanimous after [Department of Environmental Conservation representatives answered a few questions from commissioners](#), who sought assurances that [the stone and other building materials would blend into the landscape](#). [DEC had to answer questions, who is in charge?](#)

The APA review of the project was required largely because of a proposed stone staircase that's within 150 feet of the Schroon River that required special approval. But APA commissioners at a previous meeting had said they also hoped to review the final phase to ensure the public would have orderly access to the river, without scrambling down the bank on impromptu herd paths. The relatively small trail network under consideration also included a bridge over a channel connecting wetlands to the river.

## RIVER LOOP

APA project review officer Ariel Lynch said a 1,600-foot trail will loop along the river to the day-use area, while another will connect the day use area to the campground. The river loop includes two short spurs to the water, and is handicapped accessible. The connector trail largely follows an existing North Hudson trail, although in one spot it is being moved back from the river so it will not be visible to paddlers. That move necessitated the stone stairs and the footbridge.

The trail will also offer an interpretive look at a wetlands formed by an old oxbow in the river that has been bypassed by the Schroon's main channel. The state had considered running a boardwalk over the wetlands, but it was deemed to be too intrusive on the environment.

The trails are the finishing touch to a project that is otherwise largely complete. Over the past year the DEC has built roads, caretaker cabins, a ticket booth, pavilion, open horse stalls and mounting ramp, a playground, recycling center and bathhouses. The 91-acre site will accommodate equestrian campers, tents and RVs. It's located south of the decaying Frontier Town buildings that are a landmark of sorts at the Northway's Exit 29.

## REDEVELOPMENT

The state hopes to redevelop the old Frontier Town theme park — which opened in 1952 and closed for good in 1999 — into a southern gateway to the Adirondack peaks. That would, in theory, relieve to a degree the overuse of the mountain trails originating in Keene Valley and along the heavily used Route 73 corridor.

By taking a relatively short jaunt to the west, campers could access the High Peaks from the south at the Upper Works trailhead, or explore recent state acquisitions including the Essex Chain and Boreas Ponds.

The \$13 million project is designed to supplement expected private investment in the area including the Paradox Brewery, which is currently under construction.

Camping and day-use areas will be open from May to October, but the site can accommodate snowmobile trailer parking in the winter. The state expects to employ two full-time workers year-round, four additional full-time employees for 40 weeks each year, and seven part-time employees for 30 weeks each year.

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BY [TIM ROWLAND](#) FEBRUARY 20, 2019 12:00 PM

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