

Agenda Summary
June 12, 2024

Agenda Item No. A-2
Adams Camp – Recreation Management Plan Update

Summary: Adams Camp lands (±513 acres) are privately owned by Trapp Family Lodge Inc., however, are subject to the *Grant of Development Rights, Conservation Restrictions and Public Access Easement* (“Conservation Easement”) co-held by Stowe Land Trust (“SLT”), Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (“VHCB”), and the Town of Stowe (“Town”). Each organization allocated significant funding to acquire the Conservation Easement on the Adams Camp property on September 27, 2006. The primary purpose of this conservation acquisition was to provide for permanent non-motorized public recreational access, with a secondary purpose of wildlife habitat protection.

The Conservation Easement requires SLT to develop a comprehensive Recreation Management Plan and update the plan at a minimum of every ten (10) years. The original plan was created and accepted in September 2006 and subsequently updated in December 2016. The current Recreation Plan requires that it be updated in 2026 or as needed. This updated plan comes nearly two years early due to a recently completed ecological assessment for Adams Camp and a request from Stowe Trails Partnership (“STP”) to construct a new trail (Adrenaline) on the Adams Camp property.

Over the course of the last year, SLT has led the update process and coordinated participation with the property owner, STP, VHCB, and Planning & Zoning Director Sarah McShane. The Recreation Management Plan provides a framework through which the recreation-based conservation values, as outlined in the Conservation Easement, can be protected.

The updated plan allows for the construction of the proposed new trail (Adrenaline) while also establishing a recreational trail-free area in the central portion of Adams Camp for the protection of wildlife core habitat. The proposed recreational trail-free area is intended to protect locally significant wildlife features (such as a Beech Mast Inclusion Area and seepage forests) while allowing the construction of additional recreational trails on lands located outside the trails-free zone. While the plan outlines several recommendations and requirements regarding uses and management practices, the governing legal document for the Adams Camp property is the Conservation Easement.

Under the Conservation Easement, prior to final adoption of the Recreation Management Plan (including any updates or amendments), SLT must obtain input and approval from the property owner, VHCB, and the Town. Except for the Town, all parties have agreed to the proposed amendments and are ready to approve the plan as now presented.

Town Plan Impact: Stowe Town Plan provides the following broad Recreation Goal: *To provide a diversity of quality recreational activities, facilities and programs for Stowe’s*

residents and visitors. This broad community goal is implemented by the following adopted policies and task(s):

Recreation Policy #2: The Town will seek to expand current levels of service and types of facilities, including the following:

a. Additional trails and trail-related facilities.

Recreation Task #8: Support the efforts of local public and private organizations working to enhance the recreational assets within the community, including:

b. Supporting the Stowe Mountain Bike Club in their efforts regarding maintaining and building recreational trails.

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: Motion to approve the proposed amendments to the Adams Camp Recreation Management Plan.



Conserving land for our community.

Office of the Selectboard
Town of Stowe
P.O. Box 730
Stowe, VT 05672

Memo: Background for the Selectboard's Approval of the Updated Adams Camp Recreation Management Plan

June 3, 2024

Dear Stowe Selectboard,

Enclosed you will find a copy of the new 2024 Recreation Management Plan for the conserved Adams Camp property. The conservation easement co-holders (Stowe Land Trust, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and the Town of Stowe), in collaboration with the property's landowner, Trapp Family Lodge, and recreational trail maintainers like Stowe Trails Partnership, are charged with updating the property's recreation management plan every 10 years, or on a more frequent basis if needed.

This updated recreation management plan represents a full year's worth of group meetings by the representatives of the undersigned organizations to better understand what makes Adams Camp special and to collaborate and agree on a shared vision for the conserved property's next decade. Adams Camp underwent an ecological assessment for the first time during summer 2023, which underscored the importance of the location for a variety of wildlife species who need large areas of intact forest to survive. At the same time, recreation in Stowe continues to be front and center, and all partners on this plan are aligned in supporting recreational opportunities for a variety of users on the property.

The last Adams Camp Recreation Management Plan was approved in 2016. This plan update comes two years before our mandated renewal date, in light of the new ecological assessment on file for Adams Camp and a request from Stowe Trails Partnership to build a new trail ("Adrenaline") on the property this summer. This plan allows for construction of the Adrenaline Trail while also creating a formal recreational trails-free zone on the property to better accommodate dispersed recreational usage such as hunting and nature study, while holding space for animals like black bears—who are actively using Adams Camp and need quiet places to survive.

Balancing wildlife and recreational uses on the land is not always easy: [recent research](#) in Vermont suggests that many species are impacted by recreational trails, so this plan represents careful and thoughtful group deliberation as to how to protect both values for the community for the long term. The Town of Stowe's Sarah McShane has been a part of this year-long group planning process; however, the Town Selectboard needs to approve the plan before it can be adopted. All parties below are ready to sign off on this plan, and we ask for your support. We hope that the time and effort that has gone into this plan is obvious, and we welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Loeb, Stewardship Director, and Walt Looney, Stewardship Committee Co-Chair, Stowe Land Trust
Isaac Bissell, Conservation Stewardship Director, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
Sarah McShane, Town of Stowe Representative for the Adams Camp Conservation Easement
Carolyn Lawrence, Executive Director, Stowe Trails Partnership
Sam von Trapp, Trapp Family Lodge

THE ADAMS CAMP PROPERTY UPDATED RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN



for
TRAPP FAMILY LODGE, INC. - OWNER
by
Stowe Land Trust on behalf of Stowe Land Trust, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the
Town of Stowe, Vermont, and Stowe Trails Partnership

MAYAPRIL 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE OF PLAN	2
2	PARTNER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	2
3	BACKGROUND & CURRENT USES	3
3.1	PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	3
3.2	ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT	3
3.3	PROPERTY ACCESS	4
3.4	RECREATIONAL TRAILS.....	65
3.5	RECREATIONAL TRAIL-FREE ZONE	8
4	MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES	9
4.1	PUBLIC ACCESS	9
4.2	RECREATIONAL USES	10
4.3	RECREATIONAL TRAILS CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, CLOSURES, & DECOMMISSIONING	11
4.4	HISTORIC/CULTURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION	1614
4.5	FORESTRY AND RECREATION	1614
4.6	ANNUAL MEETING.....	1615
5	RECREATIONAL GOALS	1715
6	RECREATIONAL OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS	1716
7	ACCEPTANCE	2018

1 Introduction & Purpose of Plan

This document shall be referred to as the Recreation Management Plan for the Trapp Family Lodge-owned 513+/- acre Adams Camp Property (see Adams Camp Trails and Access Points Map). Stowe Land Trust (SLT), the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and the Town of Stowe (ToS), together referred to herein as the “Grantees,” each allocated significant funds to acquire a Grant of Development Rights, Conservation Restrictions and Public Access Easement (Conservation Easement) on the Adams Camp Property on September 27, 2006. The primary purpose of the conservation acquisition was to provide for permanent non-motorized public recreational access, with a secondary purpose of conserving and protecting wildlife habitat, natural communities, native flora and fauna, and ecological processes on the property.

This Recreation Management Plan is a requirement under Section 1.B of the Conservation Easement terms and provides a framework through which recreation-based conservation values for the Property can be protected and promoted in line with other conservation values as outlined in the Easement. It also meets VHCB grant conditions which require that this Plan adequately secure recreational access for the public, guide the Trapp Family Lodge (TFL) and the Grantees in resolving conflicts among users, define the types and extent of use, discuss the rights of the Grantees and Grantor to create and maintain trails, and to enhance awareness of the public’s right to access the Property.

This Plan is to be used in conjunction with the Conservation Easement and the Forest Management Plan for the TFL Property. While this plan outlines recommendations and requirements regarding uses and management practices, the governing legal document for the Adams Camp Property is the Conservation Easement. However, per Section 1.3 of the Conservation Easement, this Plan also represents a commitment on the part of TFL to make a reasonable effort to work with the Grantees and Partners to help implement the Plan. This is an update of the December 2016 Plan. The update occurred two years early in light of new trails approvals and a new 2023 ecological assessment for the Property.

2 Partner Roles & Responsibilities

- **Trapp Family Lodge** (TFL; landowner, easement grantor, trail manager)
- **Stowe Land Trust** (SLT; easement grantee, coordinator/convener, monitor, approval rights, Ranch Brook bridge maintainer)
- **Town of Stowe** (TOS; easement grantee, public access manager, approval rights)
- **Vermont Housing & Conservation Board** (VHCB; easement grantee, approval rights)
- **Stowe Trails Partnership** (STP; trail manager)
- **Catamount Trail Association** (CTA; trail maintainer)
- **Stowe Derby** (SD; trail maintainer)
- **Stowe Mountain Resort Nordic Center** (SMR; trail maintainer)

3 Background & Current Uses

3.1 Property Description

The Adams Camp Property consists of 513-acres of mixed northern hardwood forest interlaced with a variety of recreation trails (see Adams Camp Public Trails and Access Points Map). Ranch Brook runs through the northern edge of the Property which faces northeast, gradually climbing from approximately 1000 feet at Ranch Brook to over 1700 feet at Haul Road. The Property is part of a contiguous 72,000-acre forest block that spans the Mount Mansfield ridgeline, providing critical habitat to a high diversity of native plant communities and wildlife.

The Property has a 100+ year history of recreational use that includes skiing, hiking, hunting, nature study, and – most recently – mountain biking. It is open to the public for recreational use year-round. Use is currently moderate in most seasons. The Property sits adjacent to the Ranch Valley, a historic winter recreation area that supported the birth of skiing in Stowe. Trails found on the Property, including portions of the Catamount Trail and Stowe Derby Trail, provide access to a large trail network in Ranch Valley on Mount Mansfield State Forest and private trails on other TFL lands. During the summer months, the 6+ miles of trails on the Property are used by hikers, bikers, trail runners and other outdoor enthusiasts. During the winter months, snowshoers and cross-country and backcountry skiers use the trails. Fat biking is a winter trail use that occasionally occurs on the Property. The Property is open for hunting during legal seasons, and the private hunting camp on the Property is still used by the Adams family. The Property also provides access to Ranch Brook for swimming and fishing.

TFL manages the majority of the forests on the Property for firewood, timber production, and wildlife habitat as prescribed in a forest management plan approved by SLT. A harvest along Haul Road was completed on the adjacent TFL ownership in summer 2015, and harvesting was conducted in 2020, 2021, and 2022 on the eastern side of Adams Camp. Additional harvesting at Adams Camp was planned for summer 2023 but has been postponed to 2024 due to unseasonably wet conditions. In general, harvesting is conducted in a manner that maintains access to all trails for recreational users and leaves trails in excellent condition after close-out. The northeast portion of the Property is managed for sugaring and currently tapped by local farmer, Paul Percy. The sugaring lines are hung in a manner that does not block recreational access to trails during summer.

3.2 Ecological Assessment

Because of the dual mandate established by the conservation easement to provide for public recreational use while conserving-minimizing negative impacts on wildlife habitat, natural communities, native flora and fauna, and ecological processes, successful recreation management at Adams Camp should be informed by an understanding of the underlying ecology. In service of this goal, and in recognition of increasing outdoor recreation demands at the local and state levels, an ecological inventory and assessment was conducted during the summer of 2023 in preparation for the 2024 Recreation Management Plan update (Moroney,

2023). As the first ecological report for Adams Camp, this work established a baseline by which future ecological changes and potential recreation impacts may be measured.

The Adams Camp Ecological Assessment identified sensitive habitat areas and features of wildlife value within the property boundaries, including state-listed uncommon natural communities (primarily seepage wetlands), concentrations of masting tree species (American beech and black cherry), and areas of heavier wildlife use. It was noted that in some instances, recreational trails were present adjacent to, or within, these areas of ecological value. The ecological assessment does not recommended prioritizing reroutes of such trail segments at this time because of the challenges and impacts associated with successful relocation of trails, and because of the good condition, regular use, and high recreation value of such trail segments. However, future trails design and recreation management should be conducted with the following primary recommendations in mind:

- Recreational activity and future trail placement will have the lowest impact on wildlife if concentrated around the peripheries of Adams Camp in proximity to already impacted areas, while designating an area in the center of Adams Camp as permanently recreational trails-free.
- Whenever possible, sensitive habitats and areas of ecological value identified in the assessment should be buffered by at least 100 meters on both sides of future recreational trails (see Adams Camp Sensitive Habitats and Wildlife Features Map). This buffer distance was chosen in accordance with currently recommended best practices for minimizing the impacts of trail-based recreation on the majority of species in Vermont (Naughton, 2021).
- While implementation of the first recommendation is discussed in Section 3.5 of this Plan, adherence to the second guideline may not always be possible or practical when balancing ecological and recreational interests at Adams Camp. Trail routing decisions should therefore take into account the quality of each sensitive area as described in the ecological assessment report. The Adams Camp Sensitive Habitats and Wildlife Features Map depicts sensitive areas found on the property at the time of the ecological assessment. A complete summary table of management recommendations according to habitat type may be found in the 2023 Adams Camp Ecological Assessment Appendix B, including advice guidance on when to prioritize a larger buffer size around sensitive ecological features.

3.3 Property Access

There are multiple public access points to the Adams Camp Property.

3.3.1 Haul Road

Visitors can access the Property from Haul Road, a Class IV town highway that leaves Luce Hill Road at a plow turnaround and travels through private land before reaching the boundary of the TFL ownership. The TOS has installed a directional sign at the junction of Luce Hill and Haul Roads to direct visitors to the Haul Road access. Haul Road is currently used to access three private homes to its north and then proceeds into the currently conserved 1100-acre TFL Property. There is no parking lot at this access point, but there is room for 4-5 cars to park on

the shoulder of Haul Road close to where it turns into a Class IV road. The Adams Camp property abuts the Haul Road along the property's southern extent at approximately the location of the existing Adams camp, the small rustic cabin from which this Property gets its name. In 2009, SLT posted an informational sign here that lets visitors know that the Property was conserved and is open to the public. Haul Road continues along the southern boundary of the Property and terminates as a town highway beyond the Property at Mt. Mansfield State Forest, where it becomes a forest road and the Ranch Camp Trail. Haul Road is used in winter as a cross-country ski trail and in summer by hikers, horseback riders, and bikers. It also provides access for maintenance vehicles, timber harvesting equipment, hunters, and other dispersed recreational access.

3.3.2 Ranch Brook Road

A primary access point to the Property is located on the northern boundary along Ranch Brook Road, a town-owned and maintained Class IV town highway. Ranch Brook Road leaves Route 108 at Stowe Forks, where Ranch Brook meets the West Branch of the Little River, and proceeds in a generally westerly direction adjacent to Ranch Brook. The TOS has also installed a small directional sign along Route 108 to direct visitors to this access point. At mile point 0.4 the road crosses into the Property. At mile point 0.5 there is a 10-car parking area that was previously a log landing at the site of a bridge that was rebuilt by SLT in 2010 to restore access to the trails on the Property. The parking area is used during the non-winter months only. When there is snow cover, the bridge, Ranch Valley Road, parking area and trail network are groomed for cross-country skiing by SMR and are used by skiers and snowshoers. Limited winter parking for 6-8 cars is available at a pull-off at the beginning of Ranch Brook Road.

In 2009, SLT posted an informational sign at the parking area and bridge that lets visitors know that the Property was conserved and is open to the public. TOS installed a trailhead kiosk next to it in 2012 that is maintained by STP. In 2016, SLT worked with TFL, TOS, and STP to create and install a new interpretive and informational sign at the kiosk.

3.3.3 Brook Road

A third legal access point exists at the eastern-most edge of the Property at the Covered Bridge Condominium Complex. An undeveloped right-of-way exists from the condominium complex onto the Property at mile point 1.1 of Brook Road. This access may be developed in the future to provide connectivity to the Rec Path parking area and other neighborhood trails. SLT is currently working to conserve Lot 5, and plans to create a new multi-use trail that would link Adams Camp to the Stowe Rec Path (and Rec Path parking area) via the SLT-conserved Bouchard Farm at the bottom of Brook Road if the Lot 5 easement purchase is successful.

3.3.4 Mount Mansfield State Forest

Pedestrian access to the Property may be obtained anywhere along the shared boundary between the Adams Camp Property and Mount Mansfield State Forest.

3.4 Recreational Trails

The Adams Camp Property contains 6+ miles of recreation trails (see Adams Camp Trails and Access Points Map) that connect the substantial network of trails in the historic Ranch Valley and Mount Mansfield State Forest with the extensive network of private trails owned and managed by TFL. This network includes trails that date back to the earliest days of skiing in Stowe and include the Bruce, Houston, Steeple, Dewey, and Sky Top Ridge trails. Many connector trails link through the Adams Camp Property to the private network that includes the popular Cabin Trail, and much-loved Slayton Pasture Trail. The trails on the Adams Camp Property include portions of the following:

3.4.1 Pre-Existing & New Trails

The double-track trails on the Property existed before it was conserved in 2006. Hardy Haul and Kimmer’s are new trails that were constructed in 2010-2011 by STP and the TOS with funding from TOS and two Vermont Recreational Trails Program grants. Haulapalooza is a new trail that was constructed by STP in 2018. These single-track trails are optimized for mountain biking, but are open to all forms of pedestrian traffic. STP maintains the trails and provides trail closure information at the main trailhead on Ranch Brook [Red Road](#).

Maintenance of the other trails is shared between partners. TFL conducts off-season maintenance of double-track trails including brush hogging, ditching and culvert maintenance with assistance from partners. TOS and STP upgraded portions of the Stowe Derby Trail that overlap with the mountain bike trail network for summer use in 2010. Most of the double-track ski trails are groomed throughout the winter by SMR by means of a cooperative agreement with TFL. The upper section of the Adams Camp Trail above the camp has gotten rutted from authorized use by the Adams family during hunting seasons and occasional unauthorized vehicular use.

Exhibit A

Trails	Type	Description	Maintenance
Haul Road	Pre-existing double-track	Class IV town road open to all forms of recreational use year-round. Groomed by TFL for cross-country skiing in winter.	TFL & TOS ¹
Ranch Valley Cruise	Pre-existing double-track	Double-track trail groomed by SMR for cross-country skiing in winter that connects onto state forest.	TFL & SMR
Burt Trail	Pre-existing double-track	Double-track trail groomed by SMR for cross-country skiing in winter that connects onto state forest.	TFL & SMR

¹ In accordance with the Town of Stowe Class IV Roads and Legal Trails Policy.

Trails	Type	Description	Maintenance
Catamount & Stowe Derby Trail	Pre-existing double-track	Cross-country ski trail that connects onto state forest and private land. Some sections are groomed by SMR. A section of the trail overlaps with the historic Stowe Derby Trail, Valley View, and Hardy Haul. Connects to Haul Road via Triple Bypass. This trail may be rerouted along the eastern side of the Property with Grantor and Grantee approval at CTA's request to better connect to a new trail planned for the adjacent Lot 5, which is a high priority SLT protection project.	TFL, CTA & Stowe Derby
Murdo's Alley	Pre-existing double-track	Cross-country ski trail/skid trail. Overgrown. Not currently in use.	TFL
Adams Camp Trail	Pre-existing double-track	Cross-country ski trail/skid trail. Occasionally groomed & little used. Top section provides vehicular access to Adams Camp building.	TFL & Adams Family
Riverview	Double-track	Winter-use only ski and snowshoe trail that starts near the bottom of Kimmer's and connects to Ranch Valley Cruise off property.	SMR
Hardy Haul	Single-track	Single-track trail open for biking and pedestrian use year-round. Connects to Haul Road via Double Bypass Trail.	STP
Kimmer's	Single-track	Single-track trail open for biking and pedestrian use year-round. Connects to Haul Road via Ranch Camp Trail.	STP
Haulapalooza	Single-track	Single-track trail built in 2018 which is open for biking and pedestrian use year-round. Connects to the Haul Road via Hardy Haul.	STP
Adrenaline	Single-track	New advanced downhill only single-track trail open for biking and (along most sections) pedestrian use year-round. Will connect to Hardy Haul and Haulapalooza once completed according to conditional approval terms (Appendix A).	STP

3.4.2 Catamount Trail – Stowe Derby Trail

The Catamount Trail is North America's longest ski trail. Starting in Readsboro, Vermont on the Massachusetts border, the trail winds its way for 300 miles through the heart of the Green Mountains to North Troy on the Canadian border. Along the way, the trail connects many of

Vermont’s finest cross-country and alpine ski centers, while passing by countless country inns and lodges.² Nearly two miles of the Catamount Trail bisect the Adams Camp Property from west to east.

This portion of the trail is also used to run the Stowe Derby, one of the oldest cross-country ski races in the country. The Stowe Derby, which begins at the top of Mt. Mansfield and ends at the historic Stowe village, has been run since 1945. It attracts as many as 1,000 competitors, ranging from Canadian Cross Country Ski Team members and NCAA Champions to recreational skiers looking for a thrill.

Of note, SLT is looking to acquire a new conservation easement on Bouchard Farm Lot 5, which abuts Adams Camp to the east. If successful, there are plans to reroute the Catamount Trail onto a new multi-use connector trail to be built on Lot 5 with CTA and Stowe Derby approval, which may also generate an interest in rerouting the trail on the Adams Camp Property where it nears Lot 5.

3.4.3 Current Use of Trails

In 2024, STP analyzed trail data for Adams Camp using Strava Metro and determined that currently, the most popular route on the Property is up Hardy's Haul and down Kimmer's. This is true for both cyclists and foot traffic.

STP has trail counters on Kimmer’s trail on the Property and on the Pipeline trail, which falls on adjacent Trapp Family Lodge-owned non-conserved land but is used by STP to track recreationalists entering and exiting Adams Camp. The following numbers reflect COVID pandemic and post-pandemic usage:

Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
Kimmer's - 5,234 Pipeline - 7,068	Kimmer's - 5,972 Pipeline - 6,346	Kimmer's - 2,576 Pipeline - 4,390

Kimmer’s is the only trail at Adams Camp with a trail counter, but recreational use surged in the Stowe area during the COVID-19 pandemic and an upswing in use very likely extended to the Adams Camp Property.

3.5 Recreational Trail-Free Zone

The Adams Camp Ecological Assessment (Moroney, 2023) recommended establishing a ~~permanent~~ recreational trails-free area in the central portion of Adams Camp for the protection of wildlife core habitat. The ecological assessment noted the central portion of the Property as an excellent candidate due to its larger size in comparison to other currently trail-free patches in the immediate area, as well as the presence of locally significant wildlife features (such as a Beech Mast Inclusion Area and seepage forests). STP has also stated that due to occasionally wet and difficult terrain in the same area, it is a poor candidate for them for formal recreational

² The Catamount Trail website: www.catamounttrail.org

trails. A new trail proposal elsewhere on the Property (Adrenaline) has also raised concerns about balancing recreational and wildlife usage on the Property as a whole. As such, the Adams Camp Grantor, Grantees, and core partners have agreed to set aside the central area of the Adams Camp Property as a recreational trail-free zone for the protection of wildlife for the long term as part of a conditional approval (Appendix A) that will allow the Adrenaline trail to be built. The Recreational Trail-Free Zone will exist unless/until such a time that Grantees and Grantor mutually agree to change the designated uses of the zone and codify the change in a future recreation management plan update or amendment.

The intent of the Recreational Trail-Free Zone, designated as Zone C in the Adams Camp Recreational Management Zones Map, is to provide a designated area on the Property where wildlife are not repeatedly startled or disinclined to travel, den, and forage due to long-term elevated levels of human visitation associated with formal recreational trails.

Under this management plan, the new designation prohibits any formal recreational trails in/from entering into Zone C, except for (1) unique or extraordinary circumstances as determined by the Grantees; or (2) very minor trail reroutes that are within 50 feet of the centerline of the trails that fall on the edge of the zone as they existed on December 31st, 2023. (Note: Reroutes away from Zone C edges are generally encouraged to avoid any potential future conflicts between needed reroutes and the zone.) Special review for the recommissioning of important historic recreational trails may be considered by the Grantor and Grantees if recommissioning such trail(s) would not harm the overarching values for which this zone was created. Otherwise, all proposed new trails and reroutes shall otherwise occur outside of the designated recreational trail-free zone. Any such reroutes or new proposals shall follow the normal approvals process as outlined under this management plan.

Forest management, dispersed recreational use, hunting, and other applicable uses allowed under the conservation easement and this recreation management plan are permitted in the Recreational Trails-Free Zone. Partners and trail maintainers/managers will monitor for long-term recreational impacts in Zone C, including social trails and erosion.

4 Management Requirements & Guidelines

4.1 Public Access

The Conservation Easement allows for public use and enjoyment of Adams Camp year-round as referenced in Section III.1 of the Conservation Easement. Free access for dispersed recreation is allowed in all recreational zones on the Property (see Adams Camp Recreational Management Zones Map), provided that the Property is accessed from public access points.

The public also has free access to, and use of, the trails network on the Property year-round, provided that the Property is accessed from public access points, and that during the winter months visitors do not cross over onto the commercial trail networks that adjoin the Property. Skiers wishing to use the full network of groomed trails should purchase passes and access the

trails through the TFL Outdoor Center or the Stowe Mountain Resort Nordic Center. Those who wish to use the non-groomed portion of the Property may access the Property from any of the public access points; however, parking areas will not be maintained for winter access.

While the Property may be used by a variety of recreationalists, overuse can result in a degradation of natural conditions, negative impact on water courses, loss of habitat and potentially pose a threat to public health and safety. If TFL or any successor landowner suspects that any of the above conditions are occurring as a result of recreational overuse, he/she shall consult directly with the Grantees to investigate the problem and work toward a solution that does not permanently restrict the use from occurring in the future. Signs of overuse may include soil erosion, litter, and user conflicts.

Public access points to the Property may appear on public documents, maps, and marketing materials so long as these documents reference appropriate access via the touring centers during winter months.

4.2 Recreational Uses

Most forms of human-powered, non-motorized recreation are permitted at Adams Camp. All users should show common courtesy to others, and all Catamount Trail users should follow the [CTA's Trail Etiquette Guidelines](#). Bikers should follow trail courtesy guidelines on multi-use trails in which bikers yield to hikers and snowshoers and all users yield to skiers. The Borderlands [Ride With Gratitude](#) campaign is a set of values being promoted by STP to foster a shared sense of responsibility within the mountain biking community.

The following recreational uses require special consideration and on-going monitoring by partners. Use guidelines shall be posted at the Ranch Brook Road trailhead and shared in any relevant information published about the Property by partners.

4.2.1 Mountain Biking

Permitted.

4.2.2 E-Biking

Currently prohibited. Future use of e-bikes on the Property is at the discretion of the Landowner, TFL.

4.2.3 Winter Fat Biking

Permitted, but not promoted. Monitor and manage as needed. STP may groom (non-motorized only) single-track tracks for fat biking, as long as it is done in cooperation with partners (e.g., SMR) and care is taken to create safe crossings with double-track trails, promote proper trail etiquette, and effectively manage potential conflicts with other trail users.

4.2.4 Backcountry Skiing

Permitted. Cutting of any new trails or glades needs to be approved by Grantor and Grantees and be part of the Property's forest management plan.

4.2.5 Dog Walking

Permitted. Dogs must be leashed or under voice control of the owner per TOS ordinance and handlers should pick up after their dogs. Note that dogs are not permitted on TFL's other trails and must be leashed on the Catamount Trail. Monitor use to ensure conflicts do not develop.

4.2.6 Horses

Permitted on the Haul Road, but not promoted. Prohibited elsewhere.

4.2.7 Camping & Fires

Campfires are prohibited. Camping is prohibited except with prior permission from Grantor and Grantees. Monitor.

4.2.8 Hunting

Permitted within legal seasons. Recreational users should take precautions during hunting seasons. STP will post trails as closed to recreational uses during deer rifle season in November.

4.2.9 Motorized Vehicles

Permitted, but not promoted on Haul Road. Prohibited elsewhere (unless for ADA compliance).

4.3 Recreational Trails Construction, Maintenance, Closures, & Decommissioning

4.3.1 Trail & Bridge Maintenance

All trails that cross the Property should be maintained by their designated trail managers/maintainers (see Exhibit A). Grantor, Grantees, and relevant partners should meet to discuss and agree on a plan for any trail without a designated trail manager/maintainers when maintenance is needed, when the trail is being used in an unsustainable manner, or when the trail is causing significant environmental damage due to disrepair (e.g., erosion, runoff, other drainage issues, etc.). TFL and/or the Grantees may request assistance with trail maintenance from partners such as STP, the CTA, and Stowe Derby. SLT is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the condition of the Ranch Brook bridge.

STP and TFL have an MoU in place for the management and maintenance of the single-track mountain bike-optimized trails on the Property, which are maintained by STP. Maintenance includes, but is not limited to, sign replacement and maintenance, clearing of fallen trees, cutting back of encroaching vegetation, erosion control measures, and routine inspection, repair, or replacement of structures. STP utilizes Trail Crew and Trail Stewards to

inspect/assess, report, and maintain the trails in Adams Camp. Trail Stewards are STP volunteers who spend time on the trails for recreation and who also inspect and assess the trails and their condition. When Trail Stewards find an issue with the trails they report it to the Trail Crew if it is beyond their ability to correct. Then the Trail Crew makes a plan to visit the site and correct the issue. The Trail Crew also conducts trail inspections and assessments regularly. Adrenaline, once completed, will be inspected biweekly, if not weekly, to ensure the technical trail features are all in order and safe. During such trips, they typically inspect the rest of the network, particularly if the Trail Stewards have not had time to do so or if there has been inclement weather. All issues on trails are prioritized according to safety, potential damage to the trails and natural resources, and complexity of the fix. Safety is always a priority. STP also promotes appropriate use of mountain bike trails on the Property, assists TFL and the Grantees in preventing misuse of mountain bike trails during all seasons, and educates trail users about sustainable usage including obeying closures and discouraging unauthorized trail building.

Should TFL no longer engage in active trail management and maintenance, the Grantees, in consultation with TFL or any successor owner reserve the right to conduct trail maintenance, construction or rehabilitation on the Property. Any proposed relocation, permanent or temporary, of existing recreation trails (see Adams Camp Trails and Access Points Map and Exhibit A) shall be approved in advance by all Grantees. When appropriate, Grantees shall involve applicable partners in the review of proposed reroutes.

4.3.2 Trail Closures & Decommissioning

STP will close the single-track trails on the Property when conditions are unsuitable for biking or use could cause damage to trails and during deer rifle season each November. STP will post trail closure information at the Ranch Brook and Haul Road access points, as well as on Trailforks.

Temporary or permanent closure of trails may be necessary in order to address serious public safety or environmental concerns. If such a concern arises, TFL and the Grantees along with relevant partners shall work together to come to mutual agreement about whether and how to close or relocate the trail(s) in order to address the concern. Where a particular trail manager/maintainer has created a new recreational trail and it needs to be decommissioned, said trail manager/maintainer is responsible for decommissioning the trail according to best management practices.

4.3.3 Trail Construction & Relocation

New trail construction and/or trail relocation is permitted as referenced in Section III.5 of the Conservation Easement. At the annual stewardship meeting, SLT and TFL will review any new trail construction or any proposed changes to the existing trail management scheme as described herein. Any new trails that are proposed for the Property must be reviewed and approved by all Grantees. Any new trail designs shall meet sustainable trail building standards, will attempt to minimize conflicts with forestry uses including timber harvesting and sugaring, and will attempt to buffer sensitive ecological areas to the greatest degree possible and practical according to the recommendations of the 2023 Adams Camp Ecological Assessment (see also Section 3.2 of this plan).

Zone A & B Designations

Zones A and B on the “Adams Camp Recreational Management Zones Map” are the designated zones for new trail proposals and/or reroutes of existing trails. Ecologically, Zone B currently represents a less fragmented section of the 72,000-acre interior forest block of which Adams Camp is a part than Zone A (see Figure 2 on pg. 9 of the 2023 Ecological Assessment). Zone B is also directly adjacent to Mount Mansfield State Forest Highly Sensitive Area #4 (HSA 4). The Mount Mansfield State Forest 2002 Long Range Management Plan (LRMP) states that the objective for HSA 4 is to: *“protect the Northern Hardwood natural community as part of the Vermont Monitoring Cooperative’s (VMC) research area with minimal disturbance. While the northern hardwood forests found on Mt. Mansfield State Forest are not rare, they are considered exemplary for this natural community. Within HSA 4 there is an extensive, high-quality beech stand that provides excellent fall feeding opportunities for black bear. Given the size of the area and amount of bear use in these beech stands, they are considered regionally significant for wildlife values. Implementation: a. This area is designated for ecosystem research through a memorandum of understanding with the Vermont Monitoring Cooperative (VMC). It is designated as minimal disturbance, so research activities must have minimal negative impacts on the resource. All research activities must be reviewed and approved following VMC’s established process. b. A portion of the trail system for the Mt. Mansfield Ski Touring Center is located within this area. Existing trails will be maintained. Maintenance on most trails consists of only brushing but some trails require drainage and excavating work. Given the high density of existing trails in this area, all proposals for new trails will come under intense scrutiny.”*

While recognizing that Adams Camp management goals may differ from the Mount Mansfield State Forest management goals, Grantees should consider the above or most current LRMP HSA 4 vision and management recommendations when reviewing new trail proposals for Zone B. Grantees should also discuss any new trail proposals that cross the property line from Zone B onto Mount Mansfield State Forest with the appropriate Vermont Department of Forest Parks and Recreation (VT FPR) staff prior to issuing an approval to ensure open partner communication, and hopefully, agreement regarding such proposals.

In short, new trail proposals will be considered in both Zones A and B. However, more dense trail networks and/or new trails likely to receive heavier usage will probably be better candidates for Zone A than for Zone B.

4.3.4 Recreational Trail Structures

Per the terms of the Conservation Easement, most structures are prohibited on Adams Camp unless specifically provided for under the easement terms or associated with approved rural enterprises on the Property. However, the easement does allow for trail surface structures as part of approved trails, as long as such structures are also consistent with other easement terms.

Per sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.3 of this plan, the dimensions and locations of all recreational trail surface structures must be depicted in design plans submitted to Grantees and Grantor as part of the trail construction/relocation approval process, whether made of wood or other natural

materials. Grantees and Grantor will assess new trail proposals, trail reroutes, and new structural proposals for the Property based on the following categorical guidelines.

1. **Trail structures necessary for safe travel and natural resource protection** and which are appropriate to the scale of the natural features, intensity and types of use, and risks to both people and the resource, are allowed. All structures in this category will be of a length, width, and height appropriate to expected uses and shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to protect natural resources from significant negative impacts.
 - For example, bridges for spanning waterways and puncheon for crossing wet areas are allowed because of their practical resource protection values.
 - As general guidance, bridges on trails suitable for adaptive bikes should be at least 48” wide or built to current best management practices. Bridges built on trails not suitable for adaptive bikes should be wide enough to accommodate all multiple types of trail users and protect natural resources (typically around 36” on beginner and intermediate trails). Puncheon width should be sufficient to keep all users on trail. All structures must provide safe passage and will be built directly in close proximity to the ground on the main trail to accommodate all trail users.
2. **Trail structures not technically necessary for safe travel and natural resource protection but which better protect natural resources and promote user safety than a non-structural alternative** are allowed as long as size and placement of these structures are proportionate to the intensity and types of use and risks to both people and the resource. All structures in this category will be of a length, width, and height appropriate to expected uses and shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to protect natural resources from significant negative impacts.
 - For example, small rock-to-rock connectors are appropriate in locations where large quantities of soil would otherwise be required to create a viable trail tread.
 - For example, a small bridge to help users navigate around a blind rock face or to avoid a precipitous drop may be appropriate.
 - As general guidance, bridges on trails suitable for adaptive bikes should be at least 48” wide or built to current best management practices. Bridges built on trails not suitable for adaptive bikes should be wide enough to accommodate multiple types of trail ~~for all~~ users and to protect natural resources (typically around 36” on beginner and intermediate trails). Puncheon width should be sufficient to keep all users on trail. All structures must provide safe passage and will be built directly in close proximity to the ground on the main trail to accommodate all trail users.
3. **Play and skills-based structures** are recreational trails structures typically associated with mountain biking for which the primary purpose of the structure’s construction is play or skills building and not safety or natural resource protection. Play and skills-based structures also cater to a certain portion of trail users—not all trail users will be interested in utilizing them. Therefore, the following guidelines apply specifically to play and skills-based structures:

- Such structures will not be placed directly on the main trail tread. Where such structures are desired, there shall be a co-located main trail which is accessible to all users. This is important since users may otherwise walk off trail if there is no alternative tread line to a play or skills-based feature, which can widen, erode, braid, or compact the surrounding area.
 - i. Exception: Skills and play based structures *may* be allowed on main trail treads when the Grantees and Grantor have pre-approved a single-track mountain bike-only trail for which all of the following are true: 1. The trail is explicitly closed to other user types; 2. such structural placement is important to trail flow and targeted to trail difficulty level, and; 3. such structural placement will not result in a significant negative impact to surrounding natural resources.
- Play and skills-based structures should be made of wood or other natural materials, should be kept small, and should be designed and spaced to be in keeping with the undeveloped and backcountry nature of the Property. While concrete size guidelines for these types of structures were originally included in this plan, partners concluded that due to variable terrain and structural styles, such structures are better evaluated on an individual basis by Grantor and Grantees during the approvals process.
- All structures in this category will be of a length, width, and height appropriate to expected uses and shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to protect natural resources from significant negative impacts.

New trail structures will be evaluated according to the above guidelines. Notwithstanding, these guidelines are not intended to prohibit the Grantor and Grantees from approving trail structures that may deviate from them.

A number of recreational trail structures in existence at Adams Camp at the time of this plan update have been grandfathered in with retroactive Grantee and Grantor approval (Appendix B). These structures may be maintained and replaced in their current form without additional approval; however, any alterations not already discussed in Appendix B ~~will~~would require a new approval.

4.3.5 Commercial Use of Cross-Country Ski Trails

During the winter months, the network of trails on the Property may be groomed for commercial cross-country skiing. Per the terms of the Conservation Easement, Section III.9, the groomed network may be accessed from commercial touring centers and use of this groomed network is subject to user fees. In addition, members of the public may access the trails during the winter months from one of the public access points, and will not be charged a fee so long as they do not cross over from the Property onto other trails in the commercial trail network. The public may also access and use the Property for other types of non-motorized recreation.

4.4 Historic/Cultural Resources and Recreation

Adams Camp may contain historic and/or cultural features including, but not limited to, ~~old~~ **historic** stone walls, cellar holes, ~~old~~ wells, etc. Interpretive signage is encouraged in locations where recreational trails run in close proximity to such features. Locations of such features in close proximity to planned trails must be included in all trail proposals. Care should be taken when constructing, rerouting, and maintaining trails not to damage or alter historic or cultural features.

4.5 Forestry and Recreation

Every effort should be made to minimize the impact on recreational activities during forestry operations including logging and sugaring. All forestry activities must be done in conformance with a current forest management plan that has been approved by the Grantees and that is consistent with the Conservation Easement.

It is required by the Grantees that the TFL and any successor owner of the Property give at least thirty (30) days' notice to the Grantees prior to the commencement of forest management activities including, but not limited to, timber harvesting and establishment or expansion of maple sugaring operations.

In the case of timber harvesting, Grantees may require the establishment of a temporary alternative trail for the duration of the logging operation. If existing recreational trails are used for removing, skidding and/or transporting timber and other woods products from the established trails, then TFL and any successor owner shall return these trails to a serviceable condition similar to that which existed prior to harvesting or to a condition that has the least negative impact on water courses from soil erosion and other environmental considerations. Further, within 6-months of completing forest management activities, all trails shall be left suitable for recreational uses outlined in Section III.1 of the Conservation Easement.

Any maple sugaring activities on the Property should be designed to ensure that trails remain passable in all seasons. Lines should be laid out to minimize trail crossings. Where trail crossings are required, at least ten feet of clearance should be left between the trail tread and line. To minimize negative impacts on the scenic values of the Property, care should be taken to string lines neatly, pick up any trash, and remove any sugaring infrastructure that is no longer in use.

4.6 Annual Meeting

Because of the historic and cultural values associated with recreation at Adams Camp, and because the public has a perpetual right to access this Property, TFL and any successor owner must continue to manage and maintain the Adams Camp Property for recreational use. SLT, as the designated Property steward, will meet with TFL and any successor owner on an annual basis, to be known as the "Stewardship Meeting." At this meeting, SLT, TFL, TOS, STP, VHCB, and other involved partners will discuss trail management and maintenance issues, including the trail construction or relocation, if applicable.

5 Recreational Goals

The Adams Camp Grantor, Grantees, and other core Adams Camp trail managers/maintainers recognize that their activities with respect to the Property should be guided by the following goals:

- Maintain or improve public access to and understanding of the Property.
- Create or maintain a welcoming atmosphere for multiple types of recreationalists interested in a rugged backcountry experience.
- Coordinate management to ensure high-quality visitor experiences for a variety of recreational uses and to avoid overuse/misuse.
- Maintain or improve the trail network in designated zones (Zones A & B as delineated in the Adams Camp Recreational Management Zones Map).
- Maintain the recreational trails-free zone (Zone C as delineated in the Adams Camp Recreational Management Zones Map) for the protection of wildlife, the conservation of unique and/or sensitive ecological features, and to better provide dispersed recreational opportunities.
- Maintain the backcountry feel of Property.

6 Recreational Objectives & Actions

The Adams Camp Grantor, Grantees, and trail managers/maintainers believe that the following actions will be conducive to achieving the goals set out in Section 5, above:

1. **Maintain/improve the trail network in designated zones (Zones A & B).**
 - a. Continue to maintain/improve trails (including associated trail structures, water bars, culverts, etc.) as needed to meet applicable IMBA/US Forest Service standards in line with this plan. STP will also pay attention to any updates made to existing standards and/or the addition of Best Management Practices relating to trail building and maintenance (STP).
 - b. Maintain cooperation and communication between TFL & STP. Update the existing MOU between TFL and STP for single-track trail use and maintenance as needed (TFL & STP).
 - c. Request continued/additional assistance with maintaining double-track trails from CTA, SD, SMR, and Adams family (TFL). Invite these partners to annual stakeholders' meeting & consider creating an annual work plan to complete routine maintenance and special projects (SLT).
 - d. Consider adding new trail connections between Adams Camp trails and other nearby trails (in Zones A & B) when such trails would enhance connectivity and promote balance between different types of recreational uses while retaining the backcountry feel of the Property (ALL).
 - e. Complete the Adrenaline trail according to conditional approval terms as outlined in Appendix A (STP).
 - f. Plan to review a trail reroute proposal for the Catamount Trail from Adams Camp directly onto the Bouchard Farm Lot 5 parcel in 2025/2026 for a better recreational user experience, assuming that the Lot 5 conservation easement project is successful (CTA & SD, with approval from TFL, TO S, SLT, VHCB).

2. **Maintain/improve public access to and understanding of the Property.**
 - a. Monitor Haul Road and Ranch Brook parking to ensure it is adequate (SLT & TFL).
 - b. Monitor and maintain Ranch Brook Road kiosk as needed (SLT/TFL with STP input; STP for trail open/closed signage).
 - c. Maintain open/close trail signs at (1) Haul ~~Red~~Road, (2) Ranch Brook ~~Red~~Road Kiosk , and (3) online via Trailforks so visitors are aware of trail status before arriving at Property boundary (STP).
 - d. Post signs at trail junctions where needed. Consider placing educational signs where prominent forestry activity has intersected with recreational trails. Continue to create a unified style for the Property (STP & TFL).

3. **Coordinate management of multiple types of recreational uses to ensure high-quality visitor experiences and avoid overuse/misuse.**
 - a. Monitor the new recreational trail-free zone (Zone C) for issues (SLT & STP).
 - b. Consider creating a few hiker-only trails on the Property to better diversify the network and to decrease the potential for trail-conflict and safety concerns on mountain-bike optimized trails (STP, with assistance from SLT).
 - c. Clearly sign mountain biking trails as single-user type when applicable. (STP)
 - d. Post appropriate risk signage for advance downhill mountain biking trails. (STP)
 - e. Promote multi-use trail ethics guidelines such as the Ride with Gratitude campaign and IMBA's Rules of the Trail via trail and kiosk signage (STP with assistance from SLT).

4. **Monitor how this plan is working and adapt it as needed.**
 - a. Continue to meet annually or as needed to discuss and address management issues (ALL; SLT convenes).
 - b. Update plan in 2034 or as needed. (ALL; SLT convenes).

7 Maps

7.1 Adams Camp Trails and Access Points Map

7.2 Adams Camp Sensitive Habitats and Wildlife Features Map

7.3 Adams Camp Recreation Management Zones Map

8 Appendices

Appendix A: Adrenaline Trail Conditional Approval (~~May~~April 2024)

Appendix B: Grandfathered Recreational Trail Structures at Adams Camp

DRAFT

9 Acceptance

All parties hereby accept this Recreation Management Plan:

Trapp Family Lodge, Inc., *Its Duly Authorized Agent* _____ Date

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, *Its Duly Authorized Agent* _____ Date

Stowe Land Trust, *Its Duly Authorized Agent* _____ Date

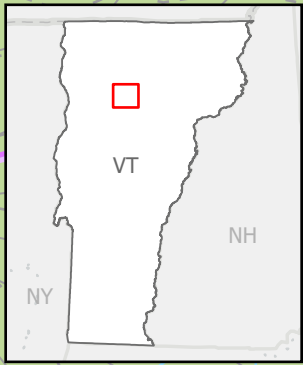
Town of Stowe, *Its Duly Authorized Agent* _____ Date

Stowe Trails Partnership, *Its Duly Authorized Agent* _____ Date

Adams Camp

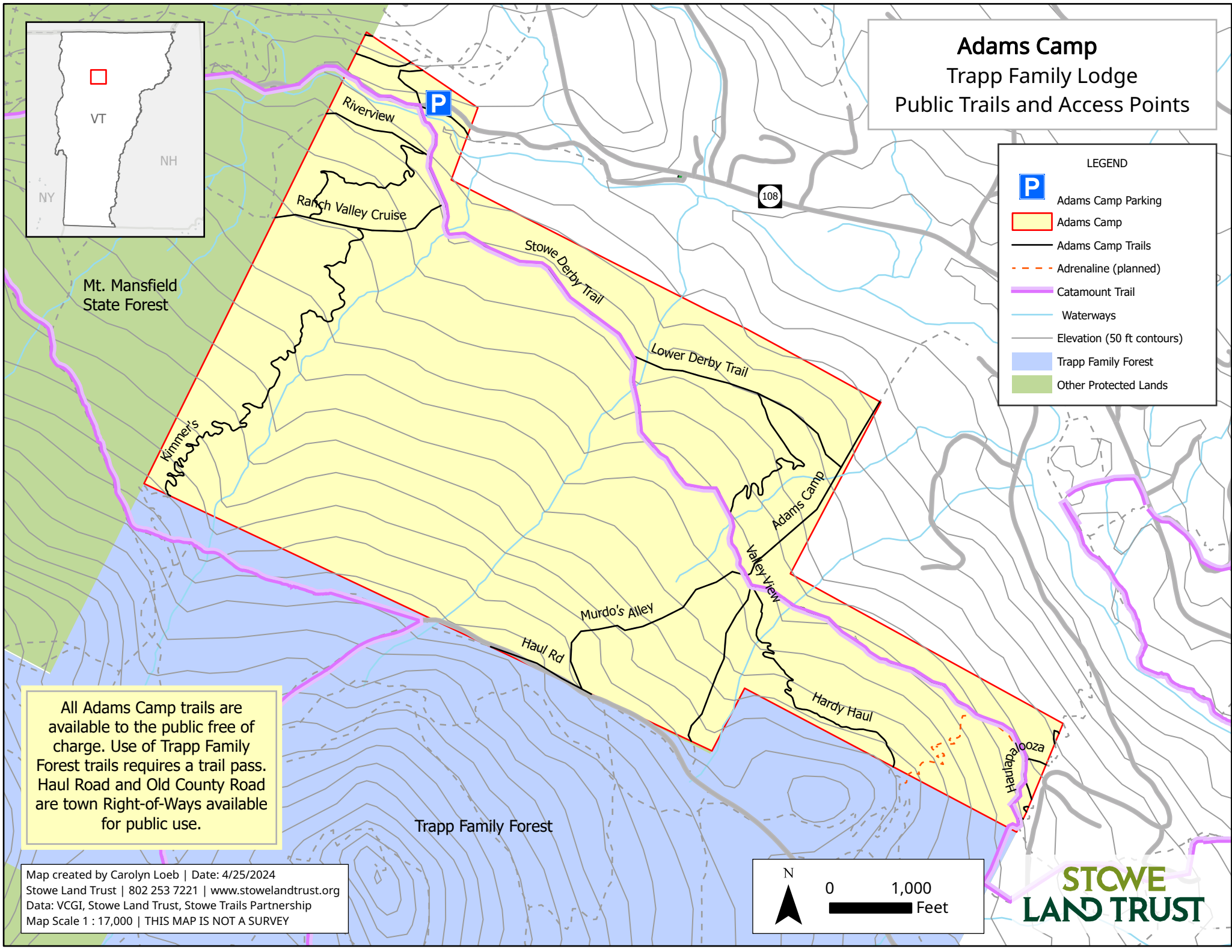
Trapp Family Lodge

Public Trails and Access Points



LEGEND

- Adams Camp Parking
- Adams Camp
- Adams Camp Trails
- Adrenaline (planned)
- Catamount Trail
- Waterways
- Elevation (50 ft contours)
- Trapp Family Forest
- Other Protected Lands



All Adams Camp trails are available to the public free of charge. Use of Trapp Family Forest trails requires a trail pass. Haul Road and Old County Road are town Right-of-Ways available for public use.

Map created by Carolyn Loeb | Date: 4/25/2024
 Stowe Land Trust | 802 253 7221 | www.stowelandtrust.org
 Data: VCGI, Stowe Land Trust, Stowe Trails Partnership
 Map Scale 1 : 17,000 | THIS MAP IS NOT A SURVEY



