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DRAFT (2/22/09)

Town of Skaneateles Conservation Areas Management Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Property Location and Description

The Skaneateles Conservation Areas include three separate properties referred to as the "Federal Farm and Associated Parcels," the "Mabel Reynolds Preserve," and the "Dunning Tract" (Figure 1). The various property parcels comprising the three conservation areas (Table 1) were acquired over several years through a variety of means.

Federal Farm and Associated Parcels: This conservation area is comprised of several parcels located south of Old Seneca Turnpike and along Gully Road that were acquired by the Town between the 1930s and 2008. B. Pavlus has produced excellent history of this property. Incorporated Bill's text here?

Dunning Tract: This property is located on the south side of US Rt. 20, just east of the intersection of NY Rt. 175. This ____-acre property was acquired in ____ from _____. History...

Mabel Reynolds Preserve: The Mabel Reynolds Preserve is located at the intersection of Benson and Reynolds Roads. The property was given to the Town in 2005(?) by the estate of Mabel Reynolds. Upon her death, Mrs. Reynolds intended her family's property to be held and administered as a nature preserve that would be used and enjoyed by the public.

Table 1. Summary statistics of Skaneateles Conservation Areas. Source: <http://ocfintax.ongov.net/lmate/taxmaps.aspx>

<u>Property</u>	<u>Parcel Name</u>	<u>Tax Map ID</u>	<u>Area (acres)</u>	<u>Year Acquired</u>
Federal Farm & Associated Properties	Federal Farm	30-05.1 ?	143.4	2001
	Old Town Dump	4 parcels		1930s-1970s
	Transfer Station	30-04 ?	72.4	early 1970s
	Fitzgerald	30-03.3 ?		1980s
	Bishop			1998
	Pitman			
	Guppy Farm	29-08.1 ?	63.4	2002
	O'Loughlin	30-03.1 ?	47.0	2008
Dunning	Dunning	42 ?		
Mabel Reynolds Preserve	West	059-01-18.1	46.7	
	East	059-01-18.3	67.6	
Total Area			440.5	

1.2 Community Input

Public input on the development of this management plan was provided by the Skaneateles Conservation Area Advisory Committee. The 19 volunteer members of this committee are appointed by the Town Board and serve to advise the Board on management of the Conservation Areas. Additional public input was provided through SEQRA Act review conducted on _____.

1.3 Development Date

This management plan was adopted by the Skaneateles Town Board on _____.

1.4 Purpose of the Skaneateles Conservation Areas

The purpose of the Skaneateles Conservation Area, as outlined in the "Skaneateles Conservation Area Mission Statement" (adopted by the SCAAC in 2003) is to provide for low-impact recreational uses and educational activities for town residents. The mission statement encourages hiking, nature study, picnicking, camping (in designated areas), fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The mission statement further states that activities conducted in the Conservation Area are intended to conserve and improve the rich, diverse, and fragile ecosystems of the properties.

The Skaneateles Conservation Areas represent one component of the Town's and Village's strategy to protect and preserve open space, and to provide its citizens with a variety of recreational opportunities. The Town and Village Comprehensive Plan states that "[d]ensely wooded areas, mineral deposits, wildlife, wetlands and floodplains, steep slopes, Skaneateles Creek and other drainage ways represent resources that help to define the community and give it character." (Town and Village of Skaneateles 2005: 17). Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan states as one of its goals for recreation, "The establishment of an integrated open space and recreation system that protects critical environmental areas which provides a wide variety of active and passive recreation opportunities for all age groups." In this context, the Conservation Areas, along with future potential acquisition of development rights, conservation easements or other open space incentives for private properties, will contribute to the long-term protection of natural areas and rural open space within the town. In conjunction with a network of neighborhood parks (managed by the Town and Village Recreation Departments) the Conservation Areas enhance outdoor recreation opportunities for town residents.

1.5 Purpose and Goals of this Management Plan

The purpose of this management plan is to describe the current condition of the Conservation Areas, and to outline their desired future condition and uses in order to guide future management decisions on these properties.

2.0 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PLANS

2.1 Federal Farm and Associated Properties

The Federal Farm and Associated Properties encompass ____ acres of maturing and successional deciduous forests, open and successional fields, swamps and ponds. This area is located along Gully Road and Old Seneca Turnpike.

2.1.1 Inventory and Resource Analysis

2.1.1.1-Vegetation Types

A forest stand inventory was conducted by Charles Porter, NYSDEC Forester, in 2002. Parcels that have been acquired since that time still require inventory. Mr. Porter delineated 25 different forest stands based upon species composition and tree diameter categories. Those detailed stands have been consolidated (Figure 2) in order to facilitate broader-scale consideration of vegetation types.

Area A spans the eastern hilltop of the "Federal Farm" tract and is comprised of ____ acres of oldfields, cropland, shrubby areas and hedgerows.

Area B is a ~5-acre isolated, successional patch of sapling red maple, white ash, aspen and buckthorn.

Area C is a ~9-acre reforestation area that was planted in the mid-1970s with red pine, white spruce, larch, and Scots pine.

Area D is a ~28-acre wooded area occupying the southern and western slopes of the Federal Farm tract. This area is bisected by private property. This woodland is composed of patches of sapling, pole and sawtimber size hardwood species (including sugar maple, red maple, white ash, basswood, hickory, ironwood, black cherry, black locust, aspen and butternut).

Area E is a ~8-acre successional patch of brush, apple, hawthorn and sapling white ash located between the base of the wooded slope (Area D) and the beaver pond.

Area F is a mixture of open water and wetland. Water levels are influenced by a beaver dam at the south end.

Area G is approximately 48 acres of pole, sapling and sawtimber size hardwoods (sugar maple, red maple, white ash, hickory, basswood, beech) that established on abandoned farmland. Scattered within this area are thin patches of planted red pine and Scots pine. A strip running along the southern boundary of this area includes sawtimber sugar maple and basswood within the Guppy Creek gully.

Area H represents several patches (~10 acres combined) of dominant plantation red pine, white pine, Scots pine and Norway spruce interspersed throughout Area G.

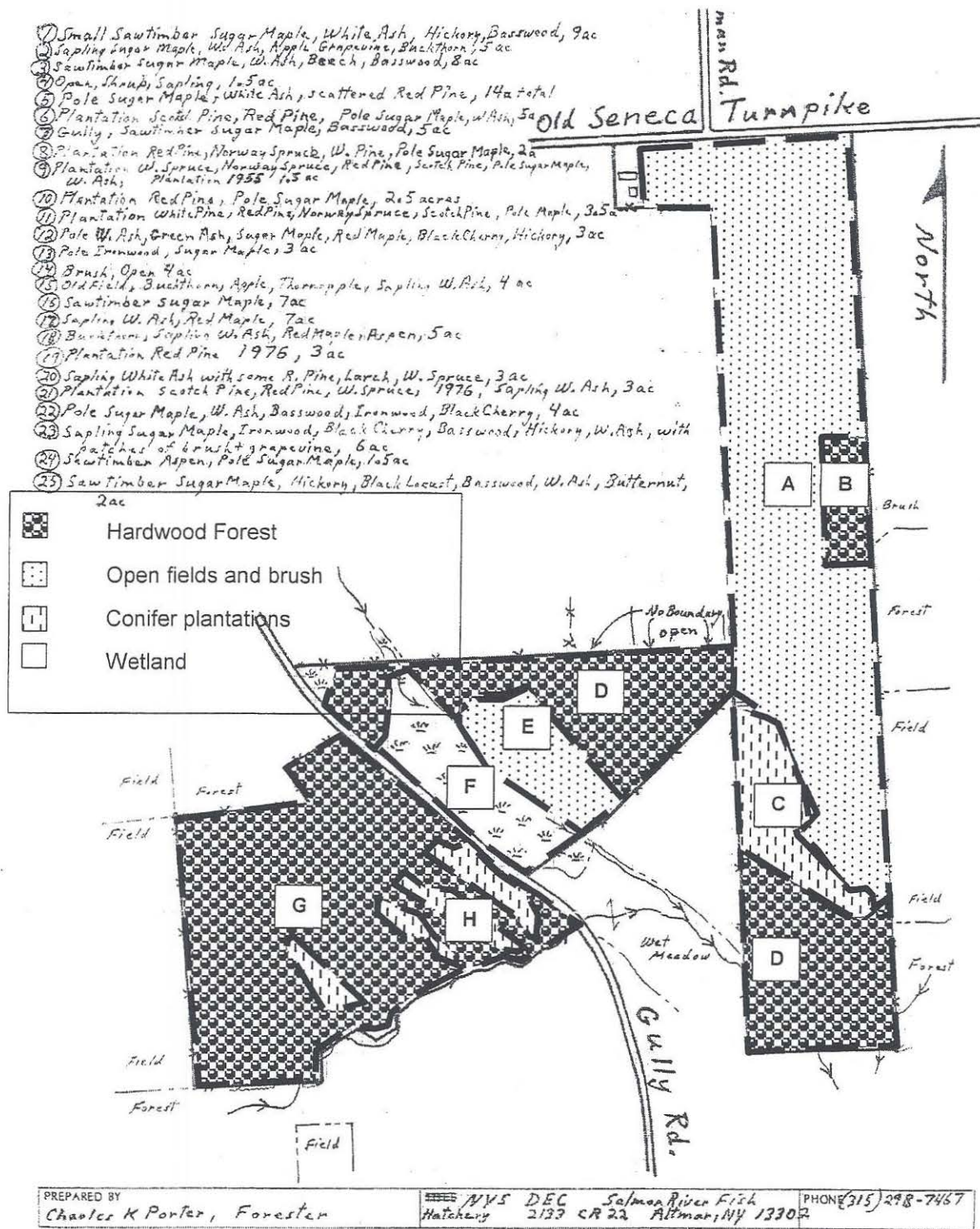


Figure 2. Vegetation type map of the Federal Farm and Associated Properties (based upon stand type map of Porter, 2002). **NEED TRANSFER STATION? PITMAN? BISHOP? and O'Loughlin.**



Figure 2. **SAME MAP AS PREVIOUS PAGE.** Vegetation type map of the Federal Farm and Associated Properties (based upon stand type map of Porter, 2002). **NEED TRANSFER STATION? PITMAN? BISHOP? and O'Loughlin.**

2.1.1.2-Unique Areas

There are no known unique areas or rare/endangered species located on the property.

2.1.1.3-Historical Resources

Guppy Farm homestead
Others?

2.1.1.4-Cultural Features

Access roads, trails, pavilion

Include map and narrative describing trails, roads, kiosks, parking areas, pavilion, lookout mount.

2.1.1.5-Invasive Species

Common buckthorn
Glossy buckthorn
Honeysuckle
Multiflora rose
Garlic mustard
Swallowwort

2.1.1.6-Unique Recreation Features

Guppy Waterfalls
Viewscales
Fishing Pond

2.1.1.7-Current Usage

Recreation (hiking, fishing, nature study, hunting, cross-country skiing, camping in designated areas – lean-to)
Scouting Events
Fishing Derby
Research

2.1.2 Management Plan

Prioritize objectives – land, human, wildlife

1. Pond/pavilion/ag. land (north end of "A")
 - a. Maintain current use of crop lands? – rationale?
 - b. Maintain regular mowing around pavilion/pond?
 - c. Buckthorn Field – Cut and mow? Cut and plant? Leave?
2. Hill top fields (central and southern portion of "A")
 - a. Establish and maintain grassland?
 - b. Permit succession to scrub and young forest?
 - c. Plant new conifer plantations?
 - d. Locust groves for future supply?
 - e. Maintain viewscape from look-out pad?
 - f. Establish new patches of aspen?
 - g. Invasives
3. Transfer station field and landfill (Not on veg type map – need to include)
 - a. Maintain current use of crop land?
 - b. Establish and maintain grassland?
 - c. Anything for landfill cap or remove from consideration?
4. West and south facing wooded slope (Area "D")

Determine forest structural goals:

 - a. Use all or some for revenue generation? → place on intense, short-entry cutting cycle.
 - b. Move toward late-successional forest structure on all or some for unique wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.
5. Plantation areas (Areas "C" and "H")
 - a. Thin, weed and grow to sawtimber?
 - b. Clearcut and replant?
 - c. Clearcut and/or thin to replace with successional hardwood?
6. Valley bottom ("E") and wetlands/beaver pond ("F")
 - a. Maintain/promote beaver habitat through willow/aspen/maple planting in scrub habitat ("E")
7. Guppy Falls hardwoods ("G")

Determine forest structural goals for gully and upland hardwoods

 - a. Use all or some for revenue generation? → place on intense, short-entry cutting cycle.
 - b. Move toward late-successional forest structure on all or some for unique wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.
 - c. Promote and expand hemlocks? (brace for hemlock wooly adelgid)
 - d. Scattered conifers from failed plantations – thin out? Leave?

2.1.3 Future priorities for property acquisitions

-Link to Town/Village Comprehensive Plan?

e.g., north of Old Seneca; north of Stump; continuing southward along Gully Rd to New Seneca

2.2 Mabel Reynolds Preserve

B. Reynolds Property 125 acres

- a. Inventory and resource analysis (Information provided by Travis Spier and Charles K. Porter, located in Appendix)
 - i. Vegetation types: maple/basswood rich mesic forest, plantations of red pine, Norway and white spruce (approximately 25% of total preserve) and open fields (forest stewardship plans – qualitative)
 - ii. Soil types – majority are Honeoye and Kendaia silt loams and a lesser amount of Lima silt loam
 - iii. Watershed – drainage pattern from USGS topo, areas of seasonal wetness
 - iv. Unique areas- two seasonal streams exist on the property (wetlands, beaver pond)
 - v. Historical resources: Early settlers noted a V shaped deer fence which spanned the distance between Skaneateles and Owasco Lakes occurring on the property. The Agricultural Census of 1850 notes that Isaac Decker owned 140 acres and had passed this farm to his son in 1833 when he died. The Reynolds's family purchased the land in 1911. Mabel Reynolds donated the land to the town when she died in 2004.
 - vi. Cultural features/access roads: many old farm roads
 - vii. Invasive species: Eurasian Buckthorn, Emerald Ash Borer and beech bark disease
 - viii. Unique recreational features
 - ix. Current usage: still to be developed as a low impact recreational area
- b. Plan – prioritize objectives – land, human, animal (organizational tools)
 - i. Land –
 - 1. Fields, keep open and maybe move to areas of grassland in some area
 - 2. Northern hardwood forests– determine forest structure goals – is it for saw timber (revenue generator?), “old growth”, what? Core/buffer zones, monoculture? Some areas used for revenue generation? Wildlife habitat
 - 3. Plantation areas – start over?, let it go? Ignore
 - 4. Reintroduce desirable hardwood species to plantation areas?
 - ii. Human–
 - 1. Work with neighbors to establish a location for parking lot for visitor usage.
 - 2. Work with the Skaneateles School District to encourage the use of the land as a resource for environmental education
 - 3. Insure boundary lines of the property be clearly delineated to alleviate future problems.

Who what where why and how

2.3 Dunning Parcel

3.0 REFERENCES CITED

Porter, C.K. 2002. Forest Stewardship Management Plan for Properties off of the Gully Road and Old Seneca Turnpike. New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Division of Lands and Forest, Altmar, NY.

Porter, C.K. 2006. Forest Stewardship Plan for Reynolds Property, Benson Rd. New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Division of Lands and Forest, Altmar, NY

Spier, Travis 2007. Interpretive Nature Trails at the Mable M. Reynolds Nature Preserve, SUNY-ESF

Town and Village of Skaneateles. 2005. Town and Village of Skaneateles Joint Comprehensive Plan. (Adopted July 11, 2005). Available online at <http://www.townofskaneateles.com/pub/docs/comprehensive.plan.adopted.pdf>