

natural bridge state park

project introduction and site analysis

09/05/23

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Governor
Maura Healey

Lieutenant Governor
Kim Driscoll

Energy and Environmental Secretary
Rebecca Tepper

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner
Brian Arrigo

meeting logistics

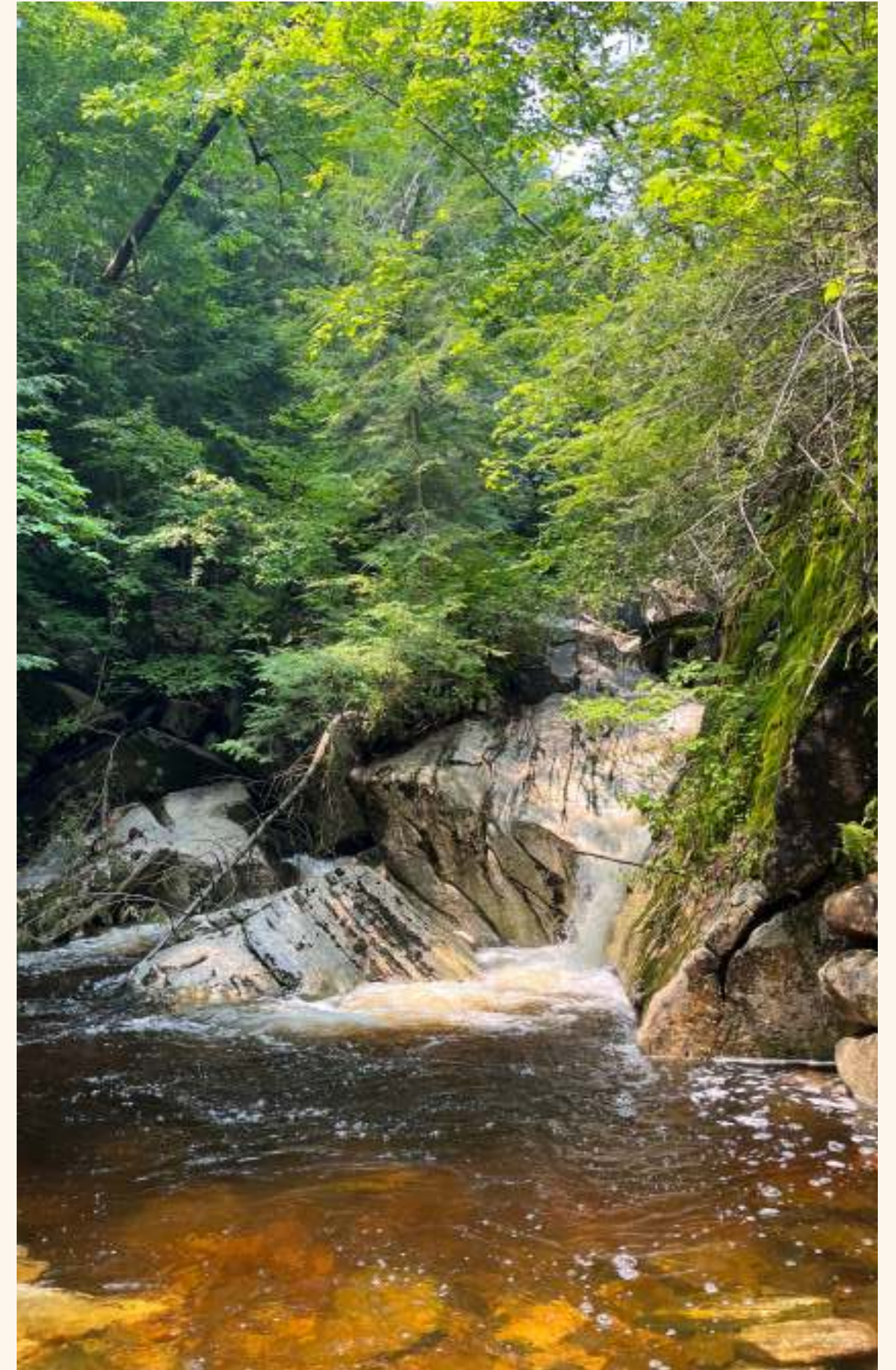
Two ways to ask questions during the meeting

- Use chat feature
- Raise your hand using the Teams function, and you will be given permissions to unmute and speak.
- Slide numbers are located at the bottom right of each slide for reference.

Please note that this public meeting will be recorded; the recording will be a public record.

DCR mission:

To *protect, promote* and *enhance* our
commonwealth of natural, cultural
and recreational resources for the
well-being of **all**.



agenda

Welcome and Introduction

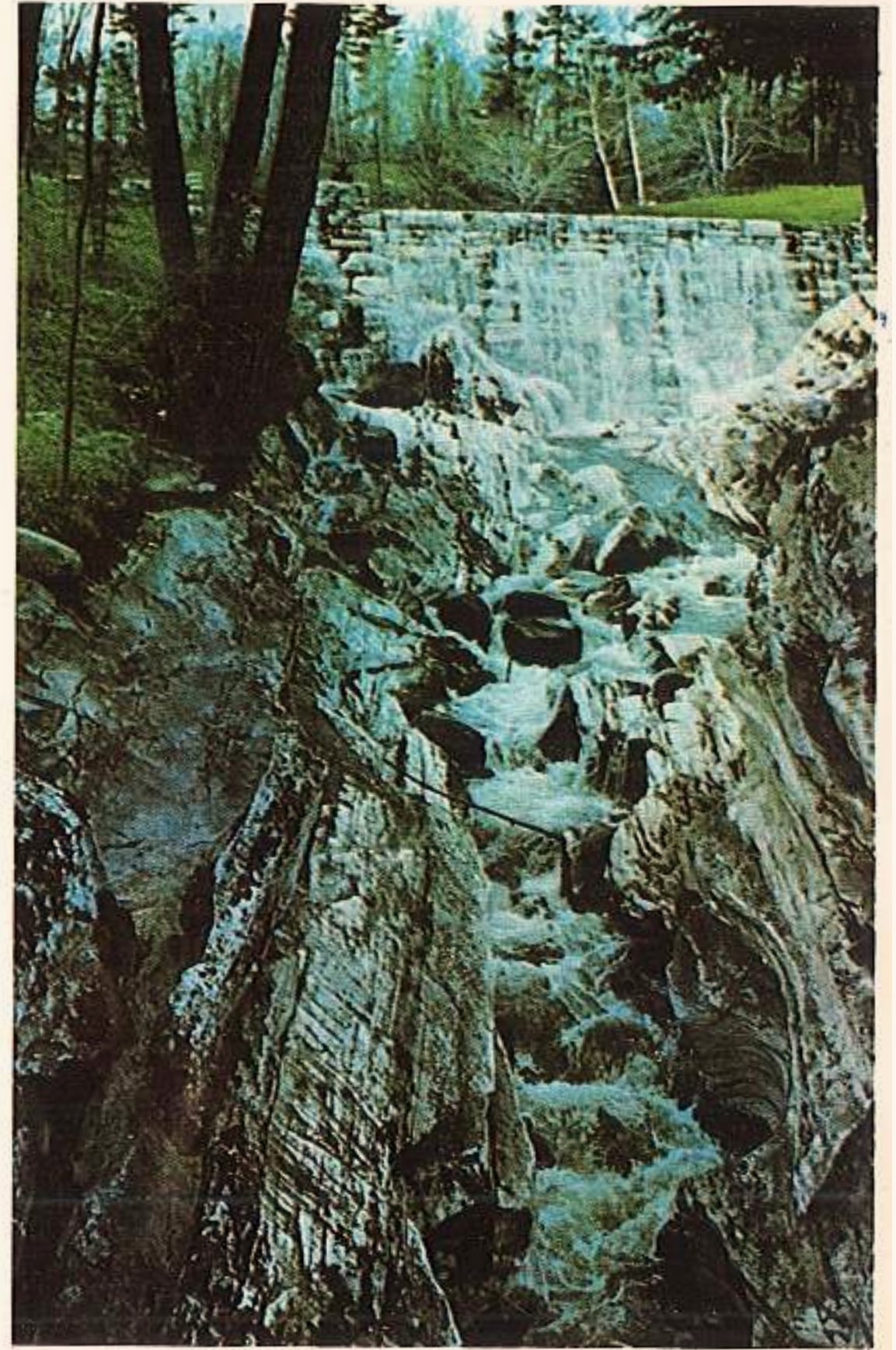
Project Introduction

Engagement Opportunities

Existing Conditions and Site Analysis

Questions and Feedback

Next Steps

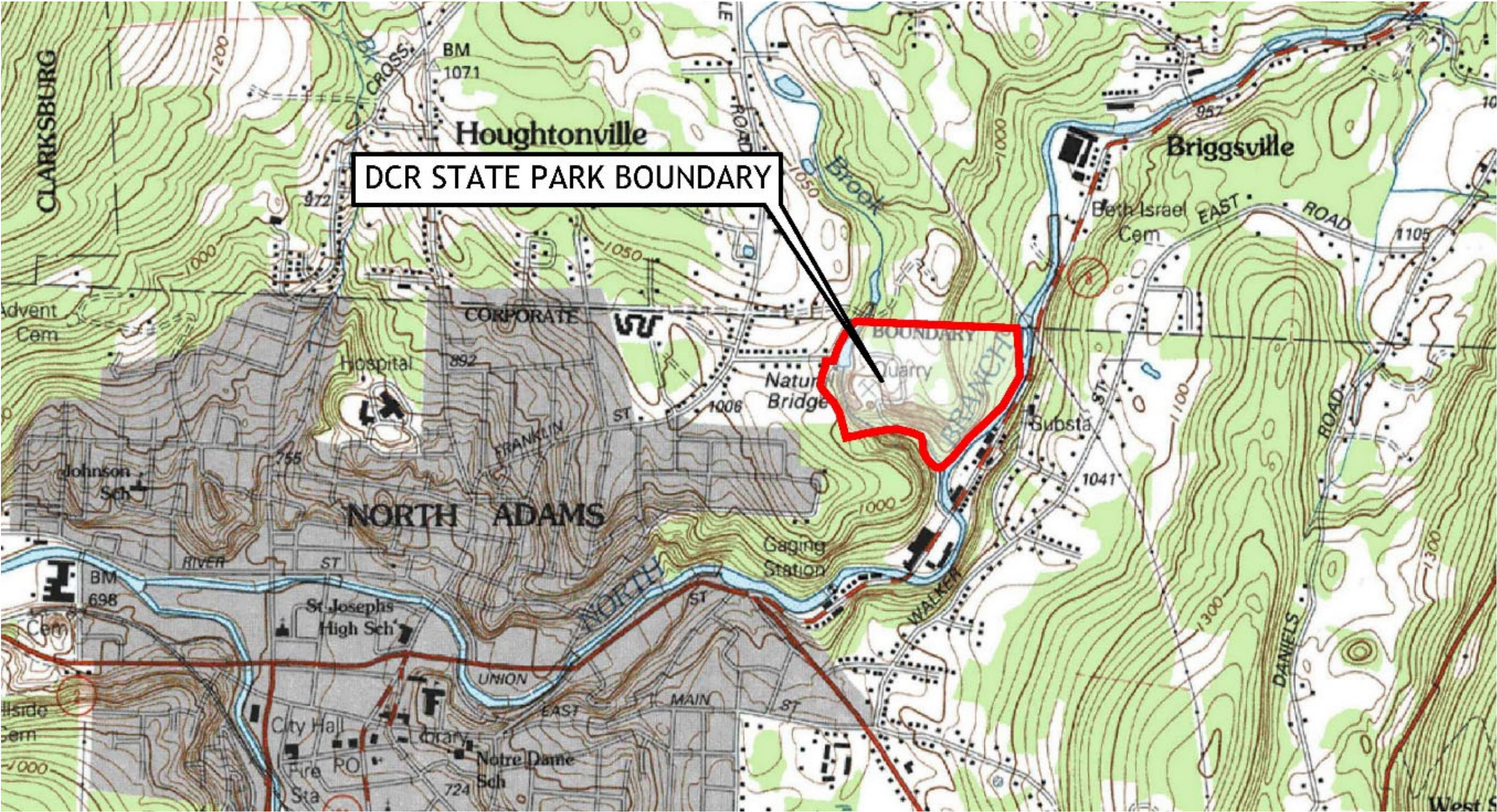


Natural Bridge - Route 8 (North) - North Adams, Mass.

land acknowledgment

It is with *gratitude* and *humility* that we acknowledge that we are learning, speaking, and gathering on the ancestral homelands of the **Mohican Nation**, who are the indigenous peoples of this land. Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the **Stockbridge-Munsee Community**. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.

site context/ project area



natural and cultural history

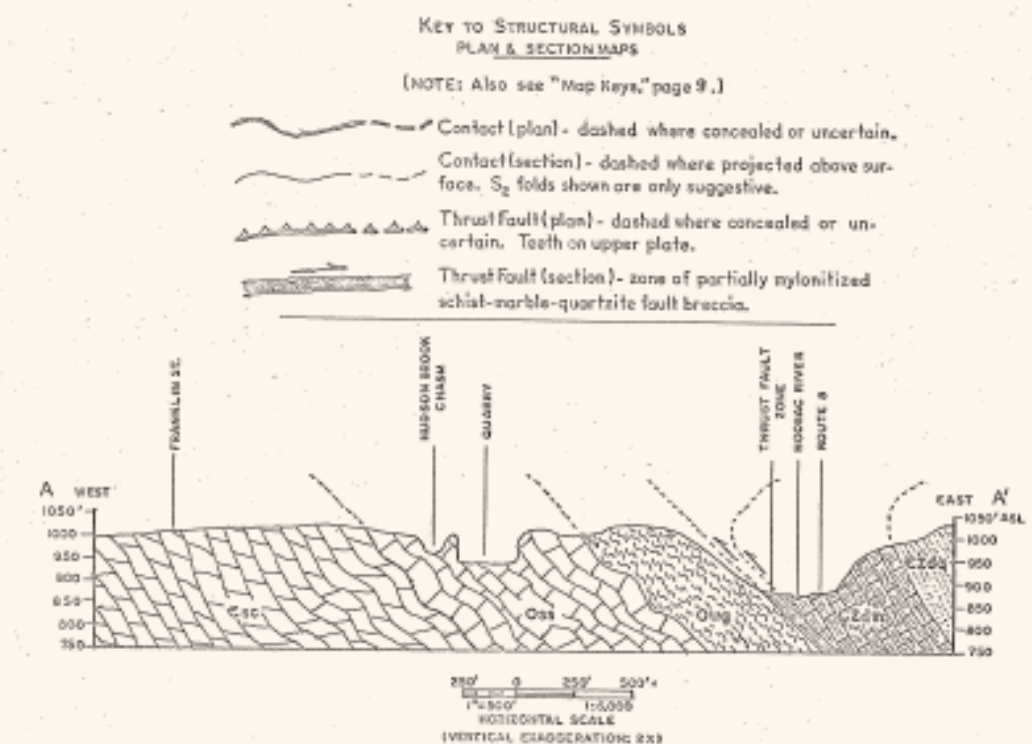
Few state parks have as rich a history as the Natural Bridge State Park.

The story of the natural bridge began 550 million years ago. Over eons, shell deposits were compressed into limestone. When the Hoosac and Berkshire Mountain ranges were formed 350 million years ago, extreme pressures crystallized the limestone into marble. It was 13,000 years ago when the retreating glaciers of the last ice age carved the chasm.

We believe as early as the 1600's this area was the hunting-grounds of Indigenous tribes that occupied both banks of the upper Hudson River.

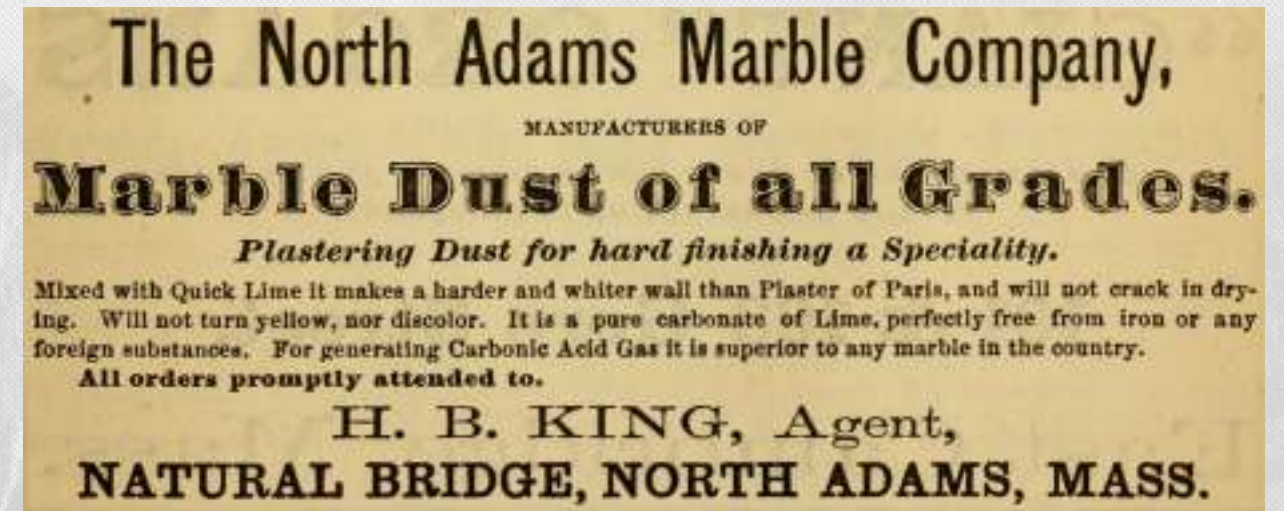
The first European settlers in this region were the soldiers and their families from Fort Massachusetts, located in the western frontier of Massachusetts Bay.

Noted Romantic writer, Nathaniel Hawthorne, visited here in August 1838 and recorded his experience about Hudson's Cave (or Falls) in An American Notebook. "The cave makes a fresh impression on me every time I visit it ... so deep, so irregular, so gloomy, so stern."



industrial history

It was a thriving industrial site – a marble quarry that operated from 1810 to 1947. The site features a circa-1838 white marble dam built to power the quarry works. A mill was built to use the rushing water to power the saws used to cut the marble blocks and power a new industrial revolution for the North Adams area. The commercial quarry produced coarse-grained white marble used as stone for cemetery monuments, storefronts, fireplace mantels, and hearths, and sold locally. The quarry operation came to a sudden end in 1947 when the mill was engulfed in flames set off by a dynamite explosion, resulting in bankruptcy.

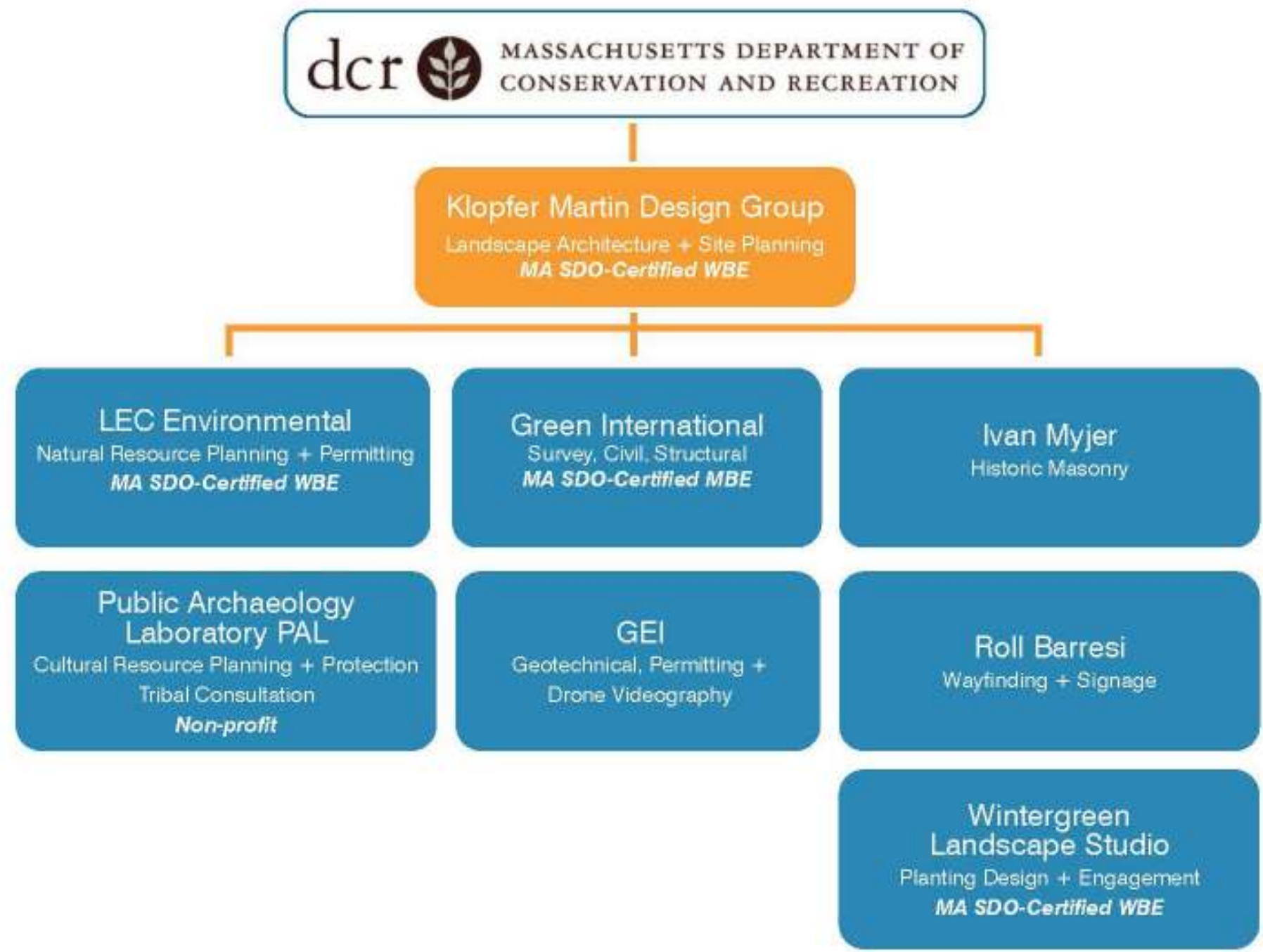


park history

From 1950 to 1983 it was privately owned by Edward and Agnes Elder and became a popular tourist attraction off the Mohawk Trail. The park included grills, restrooms and a gift shop creating a welcoming, family-oriented attraction that brought visitors from around the world to see the natural attractions. With the passing of Edward Elder in 1984, the site became a 44-acre state park in 1985 to preserve its unique geological features. Today the park is used to provide public access and enjoyment of this natural wonder. It's open seasonally from May to October, from 9am to 4:30pm.



design team organization



LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION + MANAGEMENT

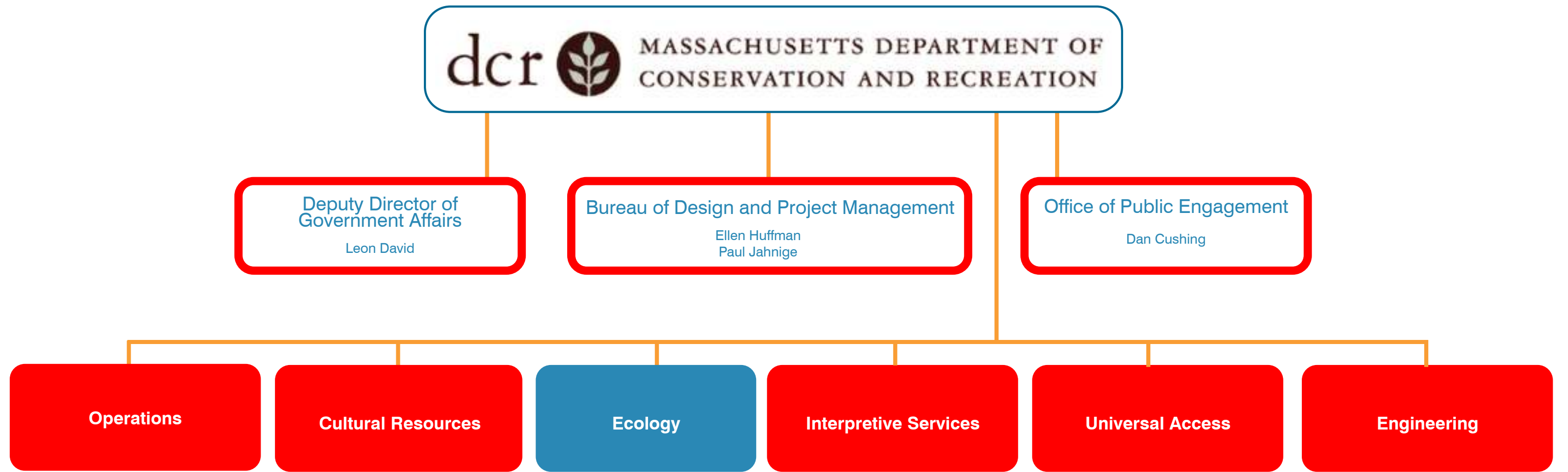
KMDG (WBE)

- site planning and landscape architecture, project management, and technical coordination and documentation. KMDG will lead the public engagement and outreach

Wintergreen (WBE)

- for local public process, planting design, and engagement

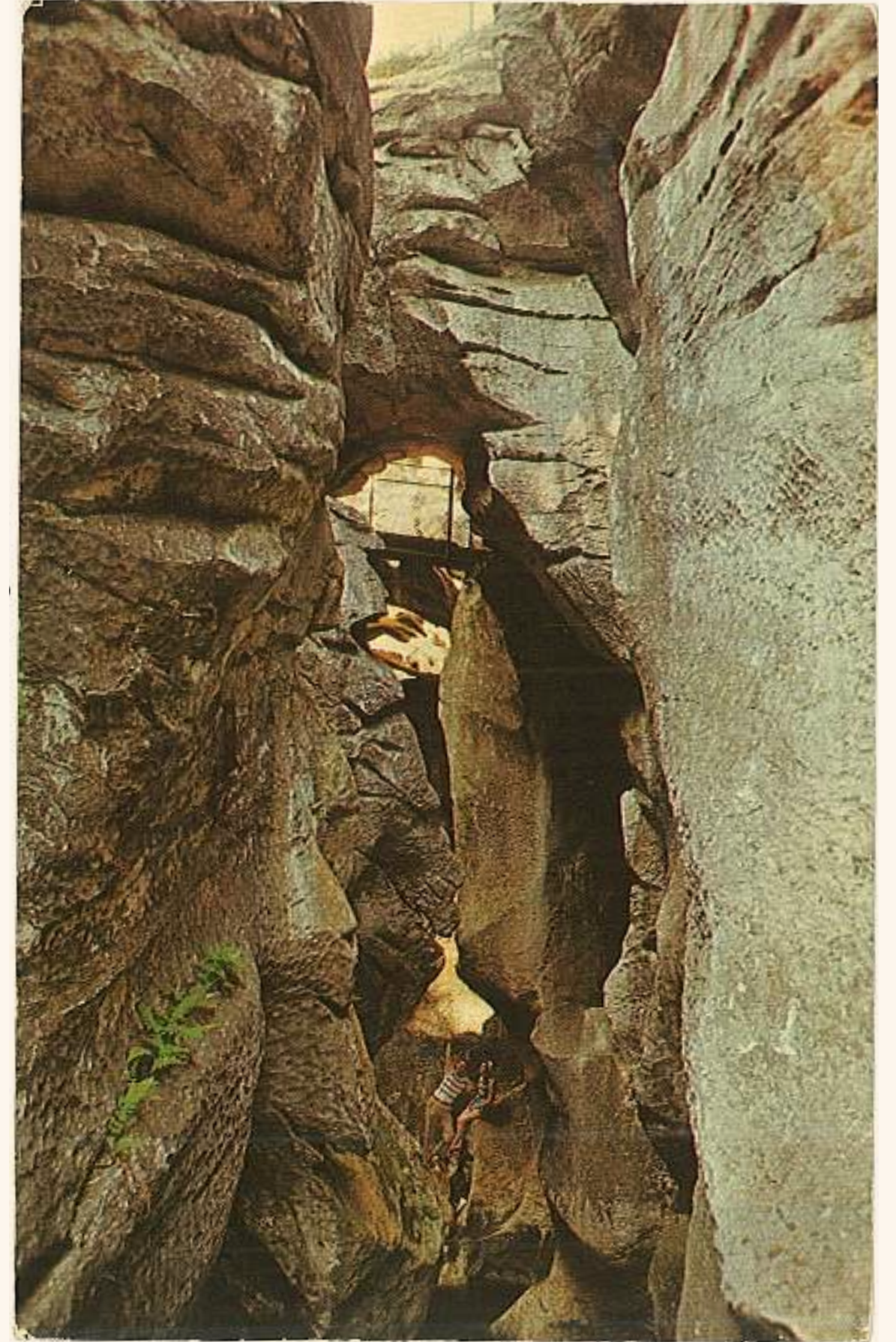
DCR team



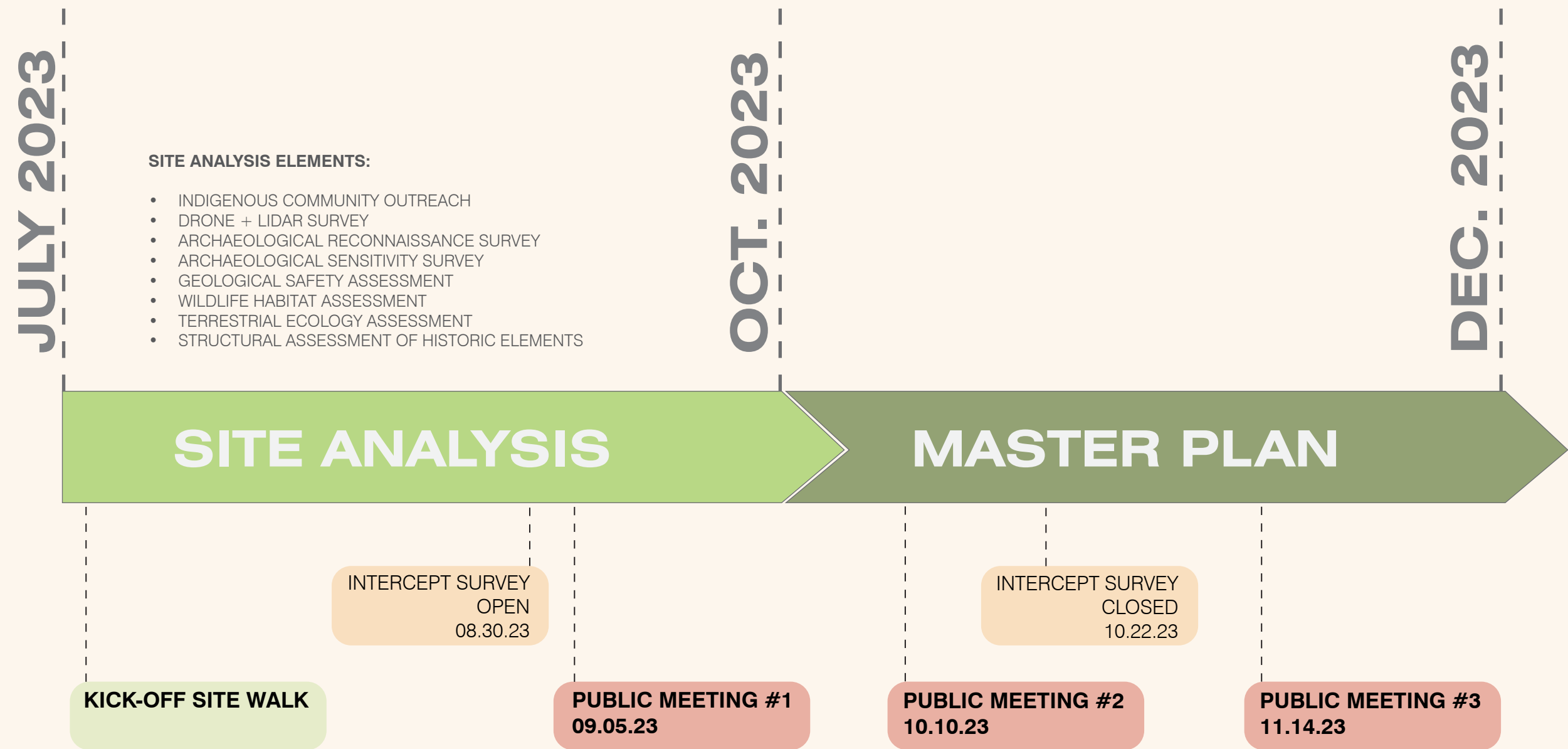
project design goals

- Provide safe and increased access to the amazing views and natural features
- Strengthen the interpretation of both the natural and human histories of the site
- Connect the elements of the park in a singular circulation route

**How do these goals resonate with you?
What are your priorities?**



project schedule



current engagement/ proposed engagement

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



Natural Bridge State Park is undergoing a new master planning effort to improve access and enhance visitor experience.

As part of this process, the Design Team wants to hear from Park Visitors, like you.

Please select the appropriate QR Code below to access a brief survey (takes one minute):

North Adams
Resident



Regional Visitor
(under a 1-hour drive)



Long-Distance Visitor
(over a 1-hour drive)



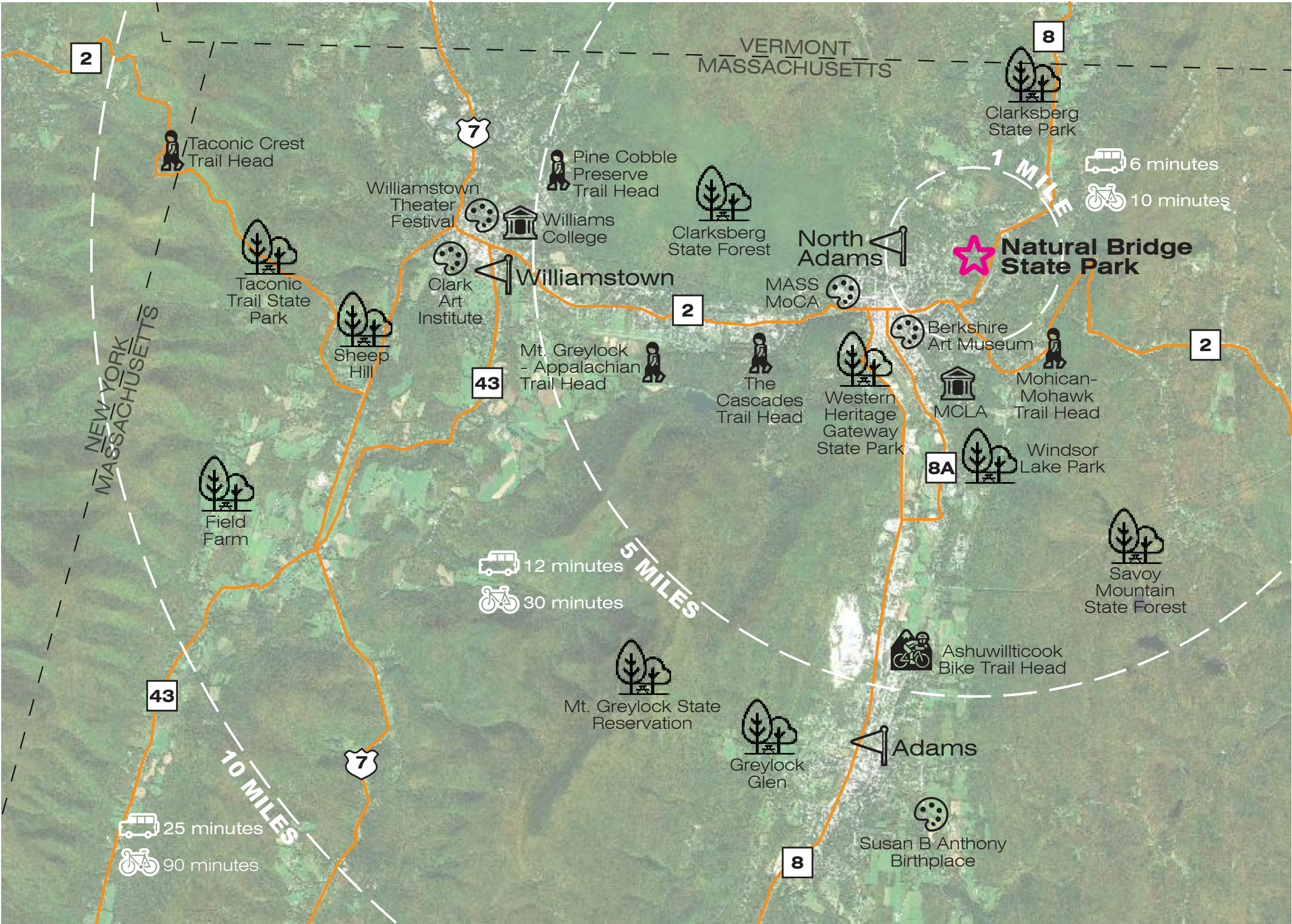
Thank you for sharing your thoughts to support the legacy of Natural Bridge State Park!



Which user group do you fall into?

Survey links are posted in the chat room

site context/ project area

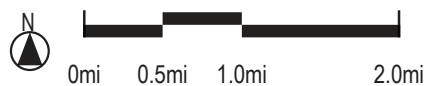


Key Map

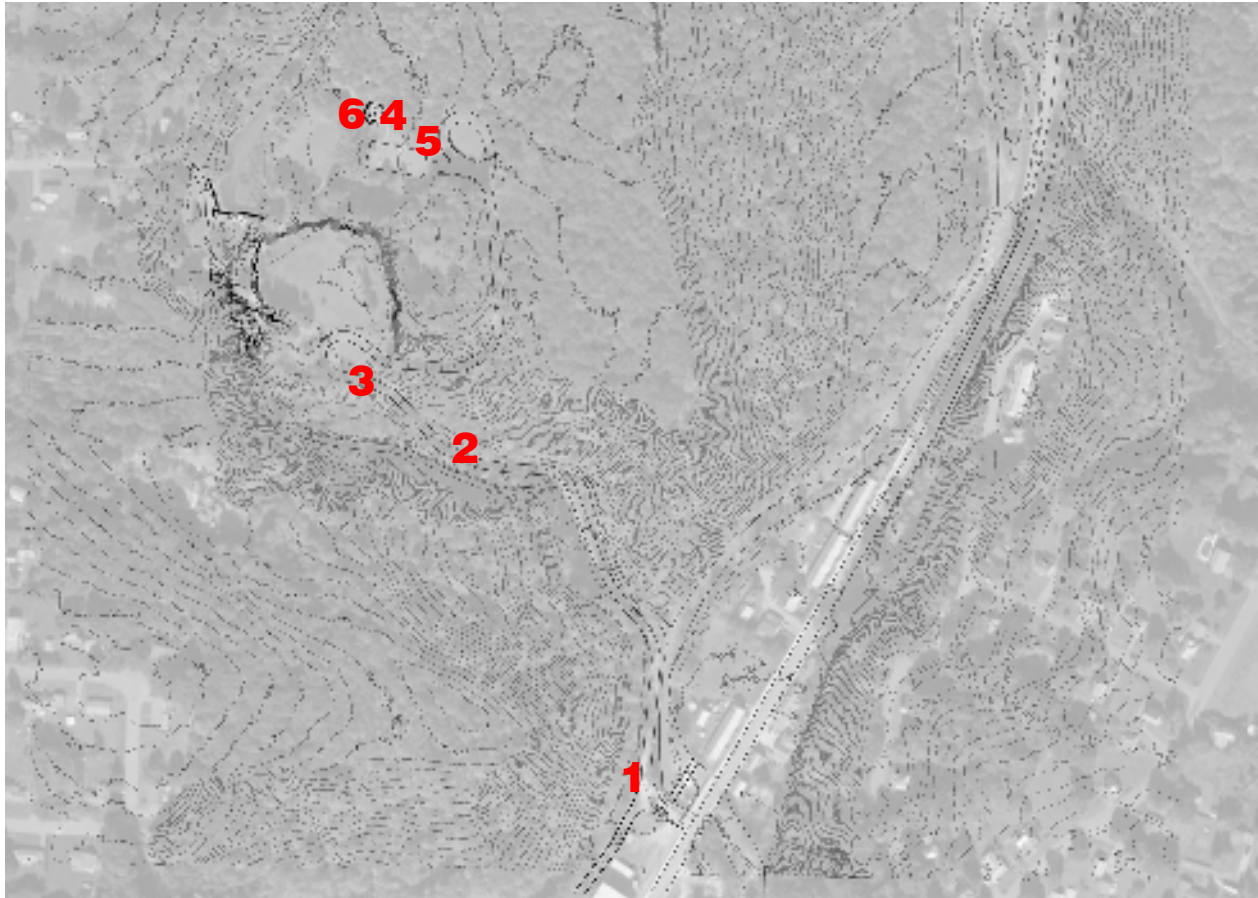


Legend

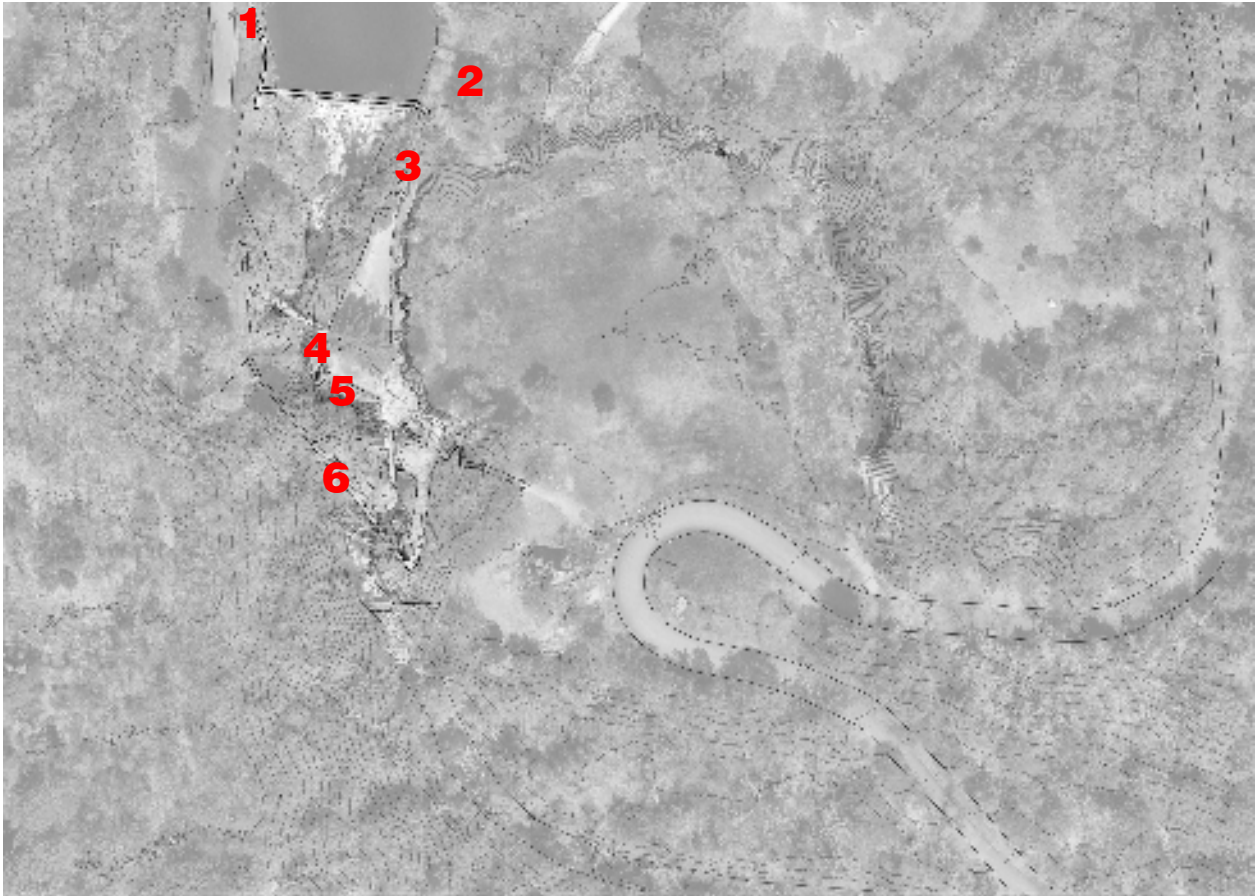
- City
- School
- Cultural Institution
- Park / Open Space
- Hiking Trail Head
- Biking Trail Head
- US + State Routes



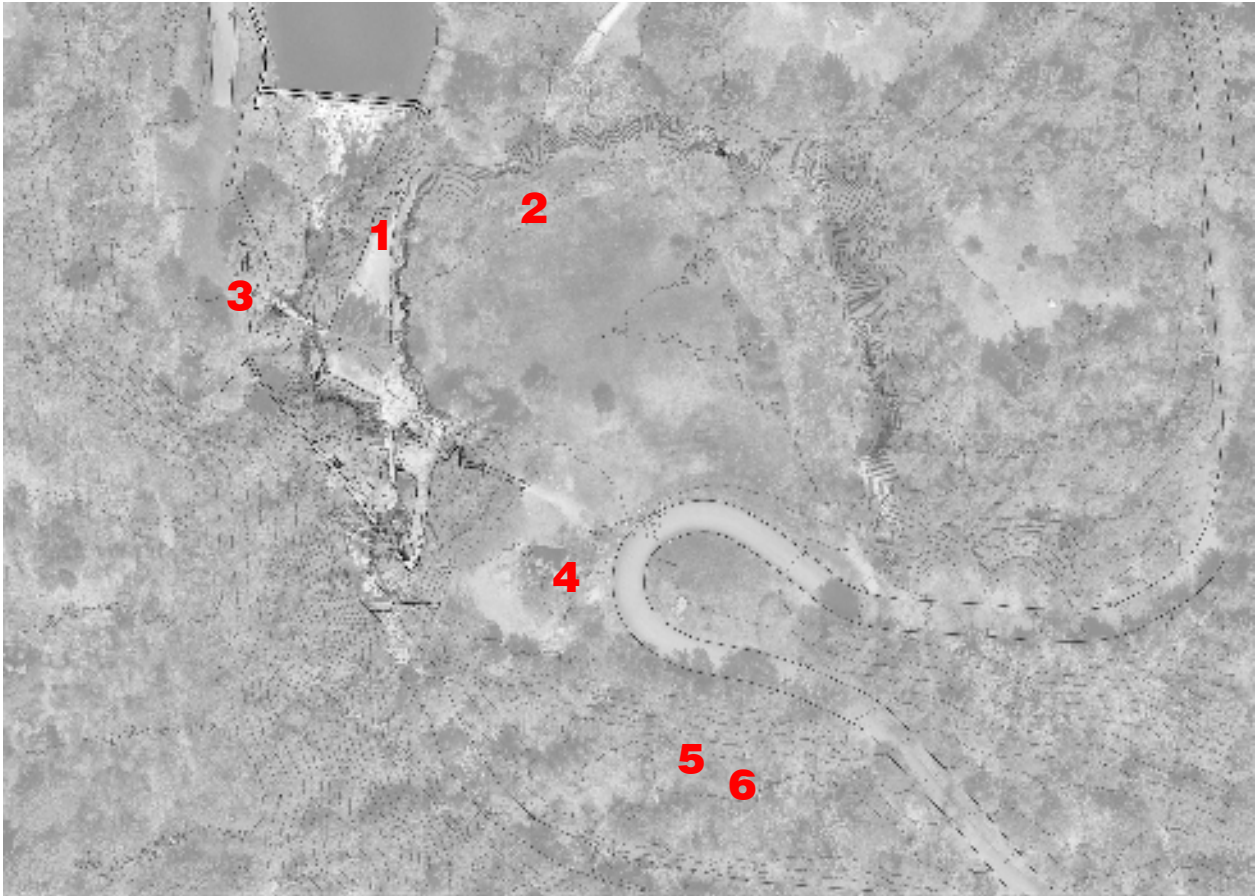
park entry sequence



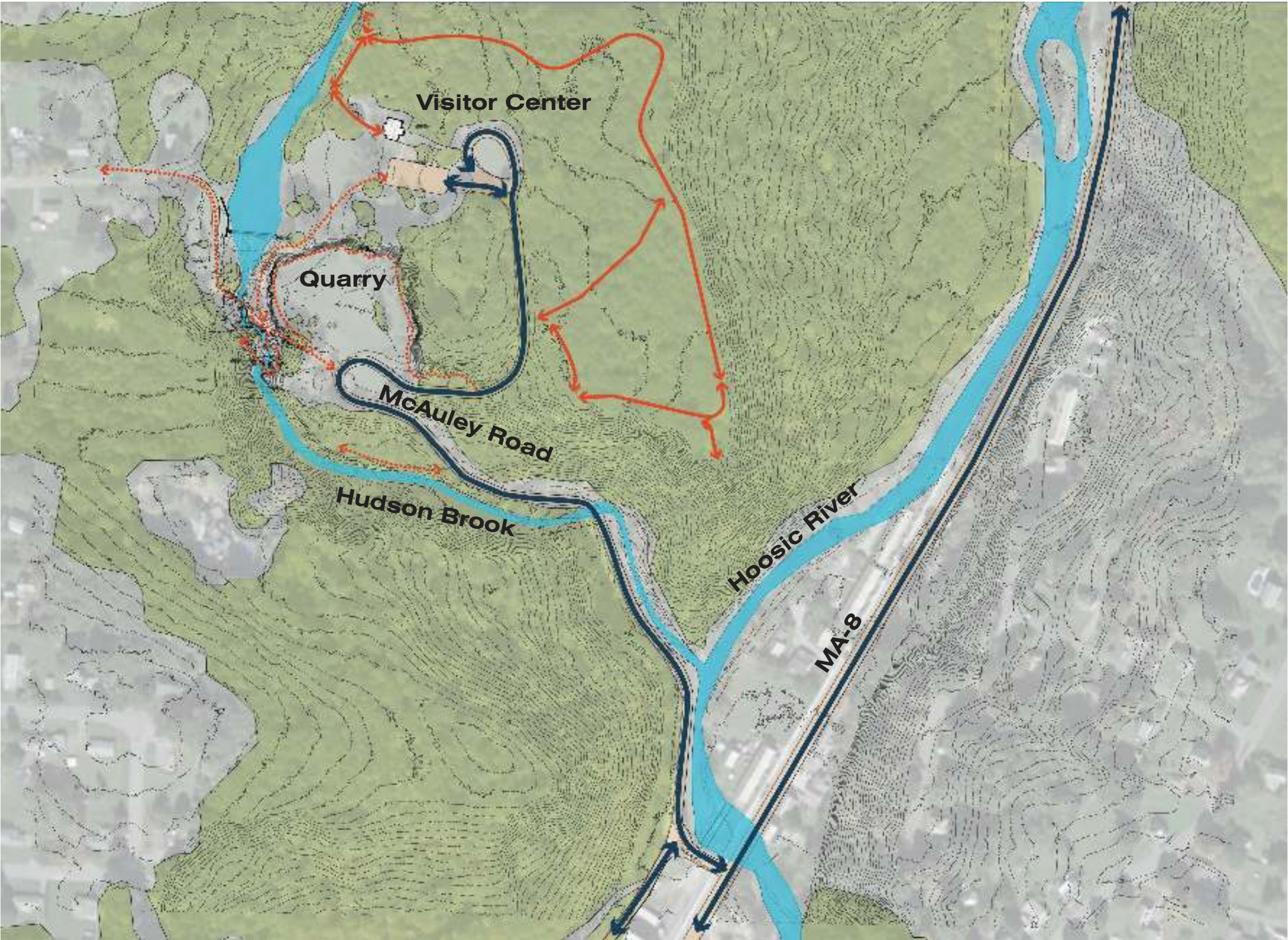
park natural features










park industrial features

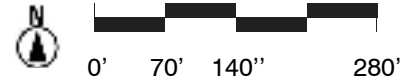


site circulation

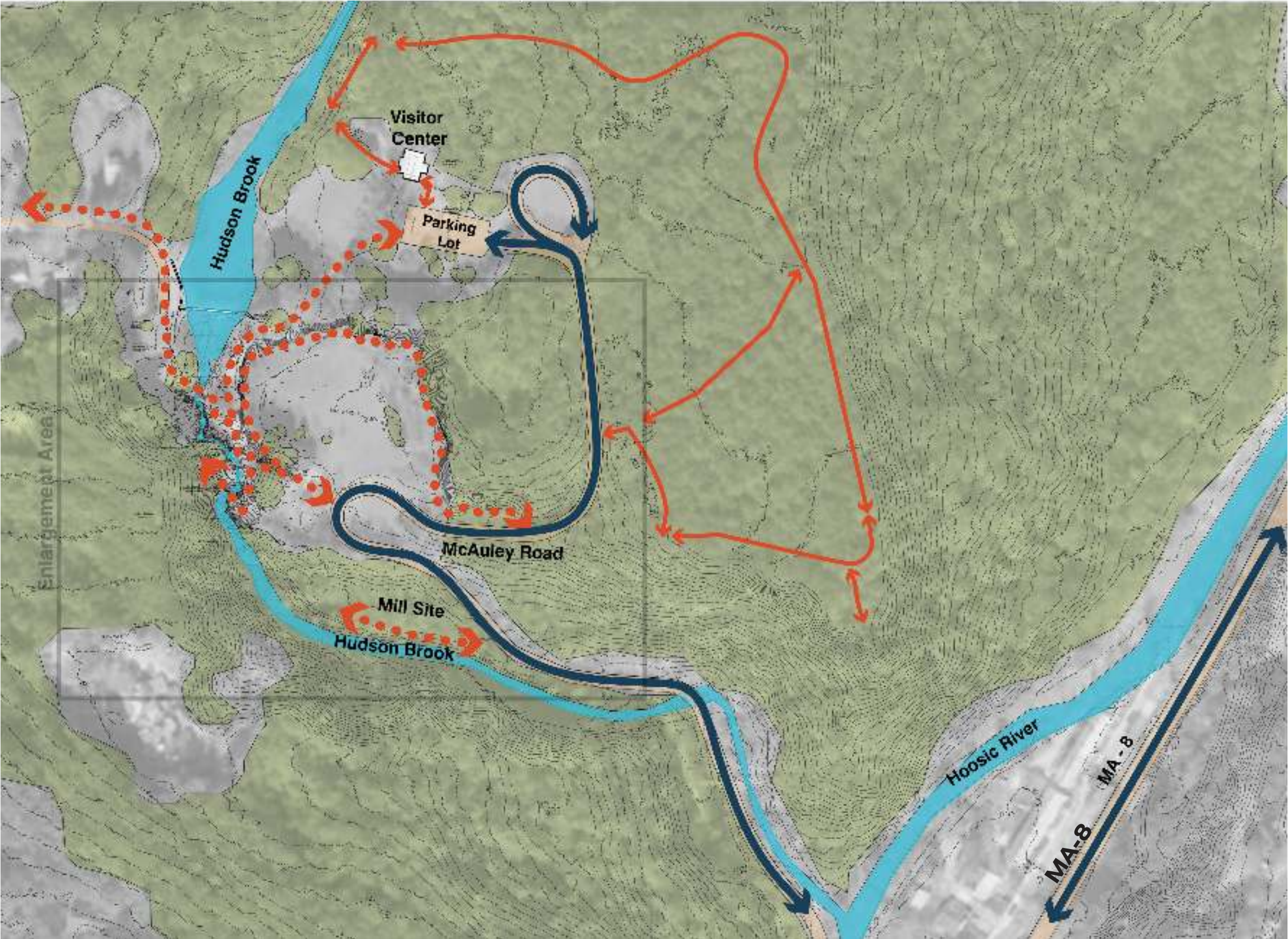


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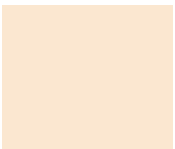




-  Building
-  Tree Canopy
-  Roadway
-  Water
-  Pedestrian Circulation
-  Healthy Heart Trail
-  Vehicular Circulation

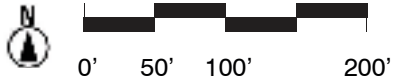


site circulation

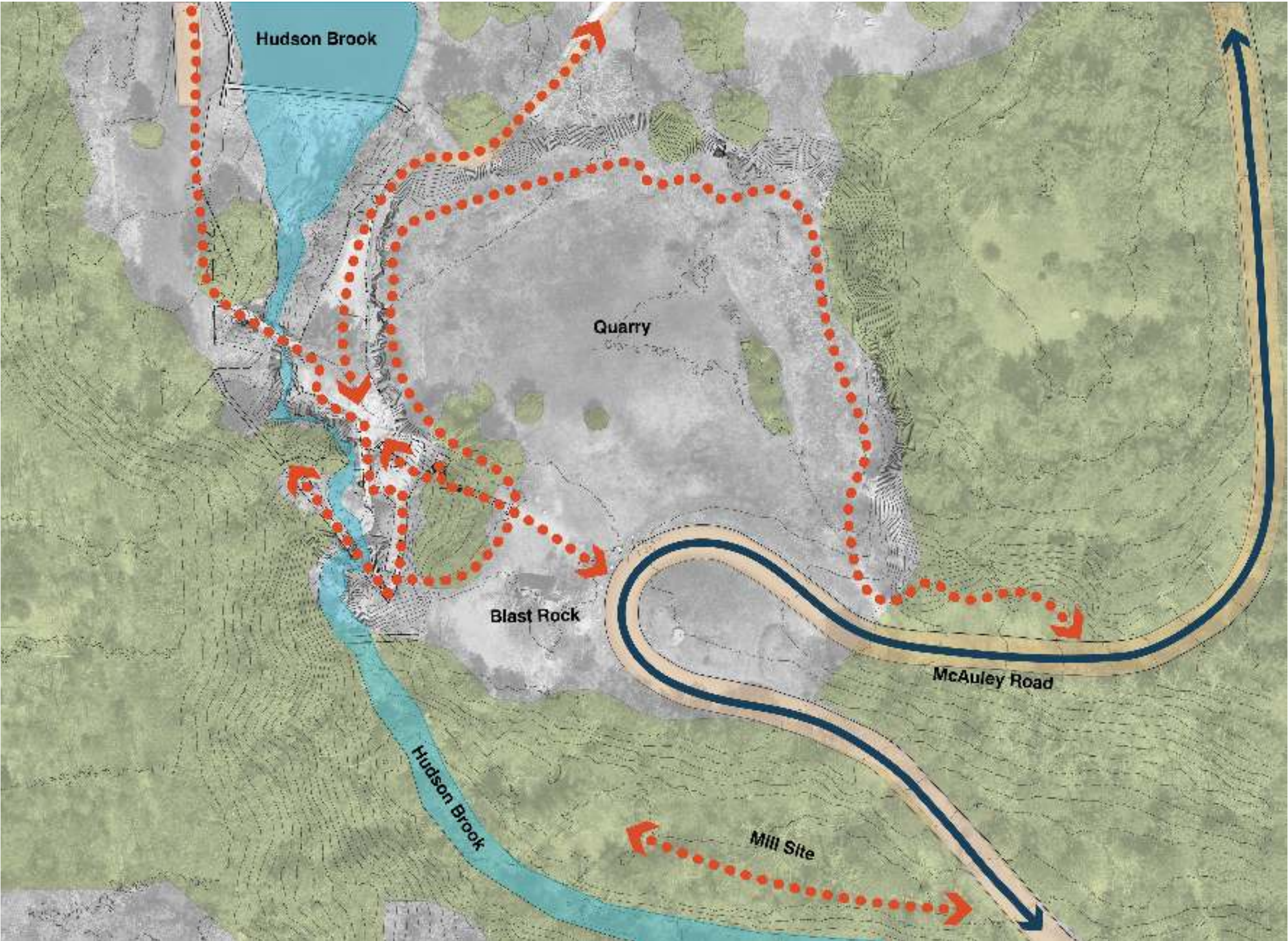


Legend

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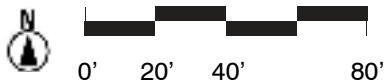


site circulation

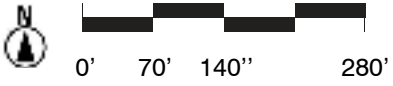
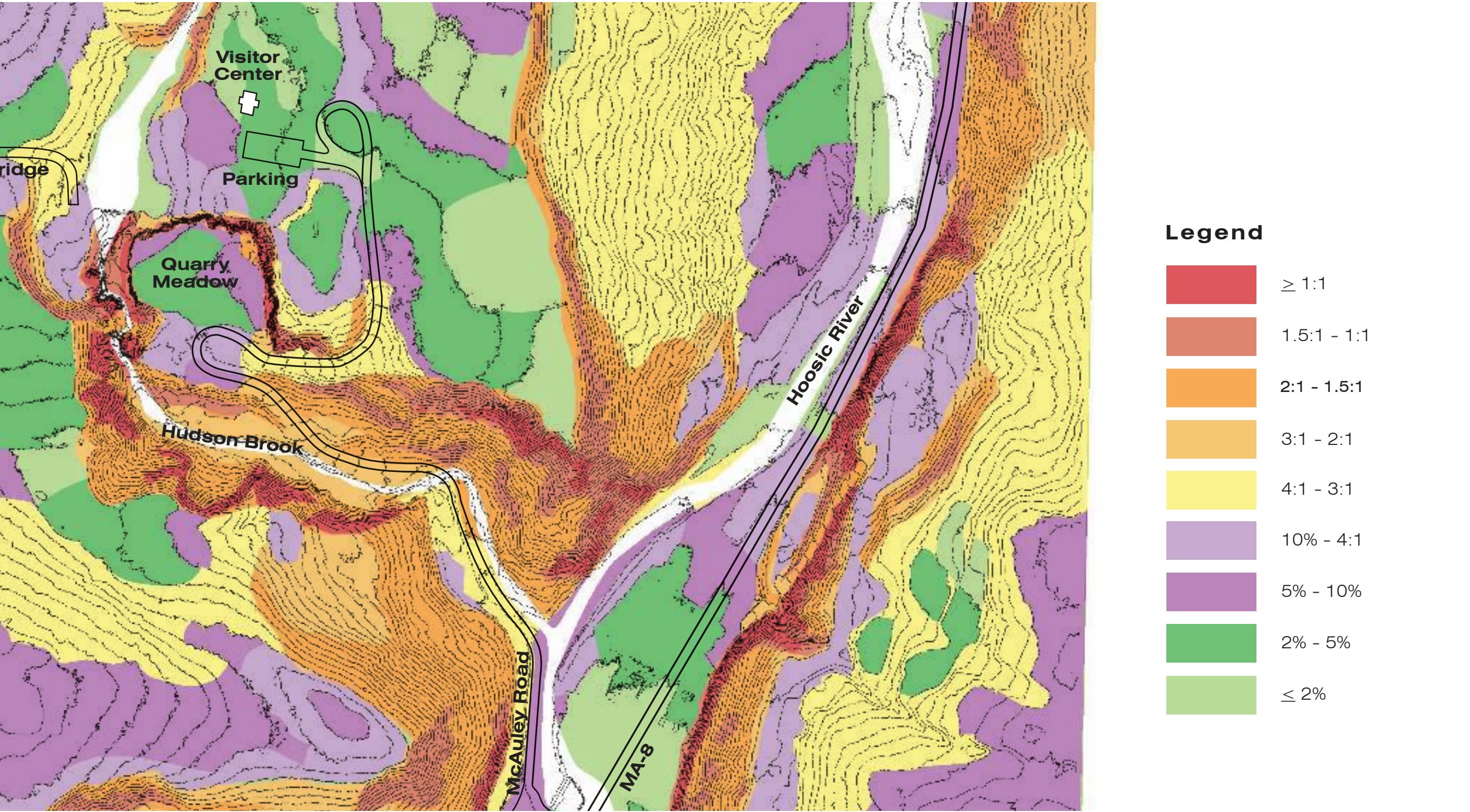


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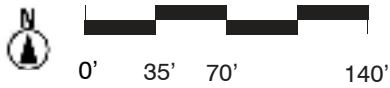
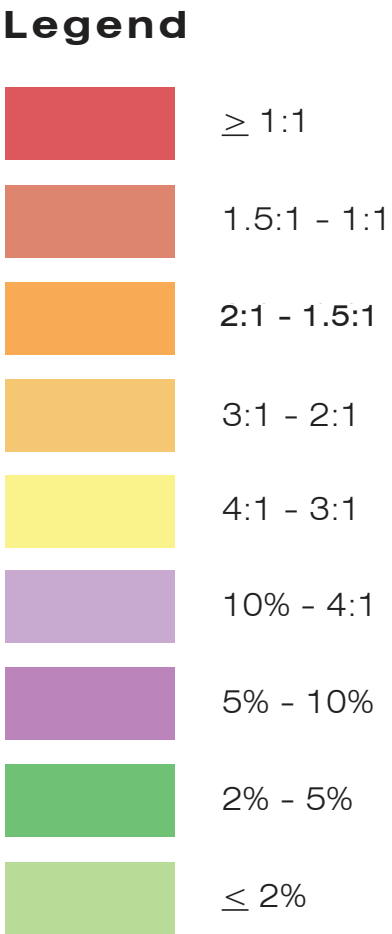
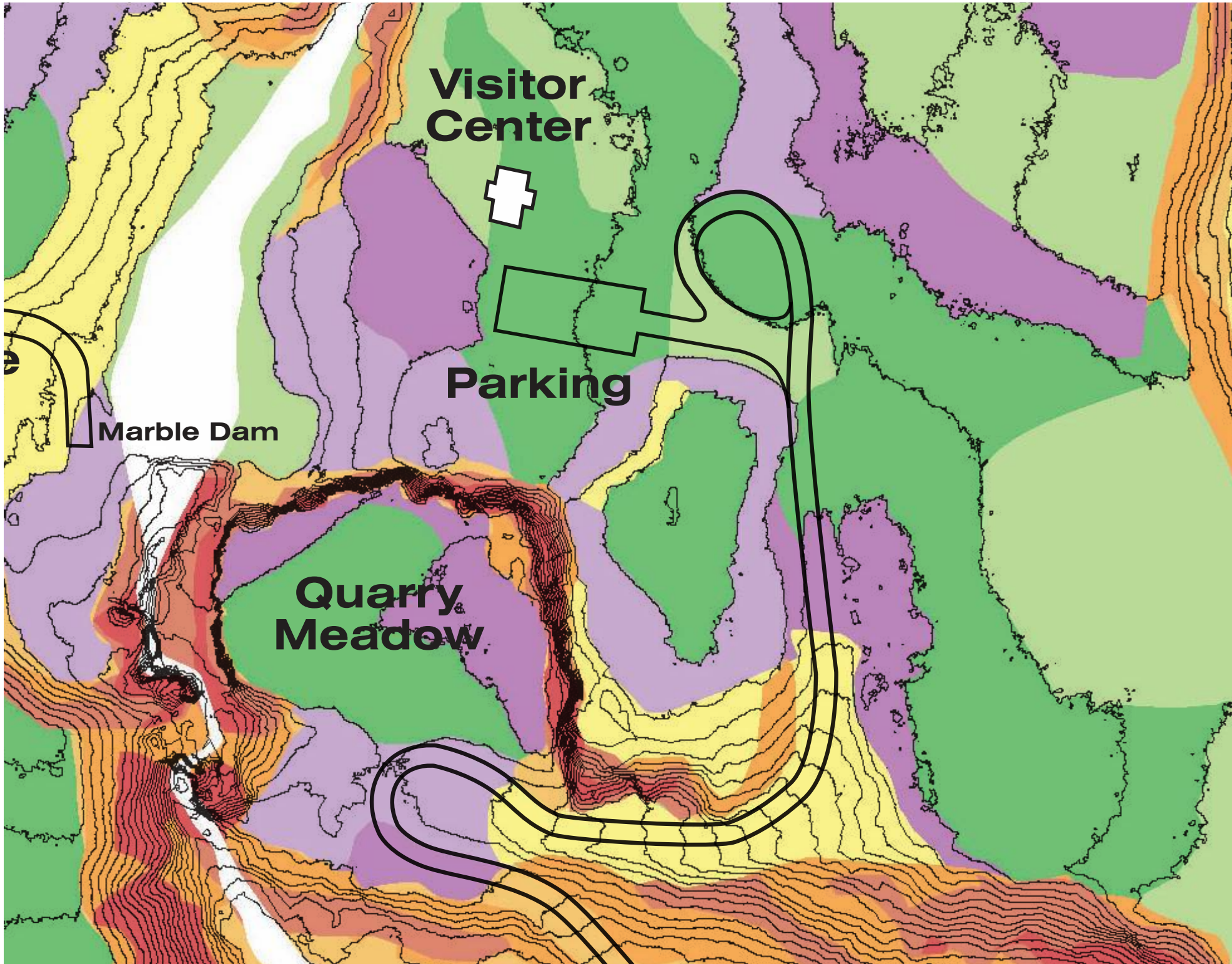
	Building
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	Vehicular Circulation



slope analysis



slope analysis



discussion

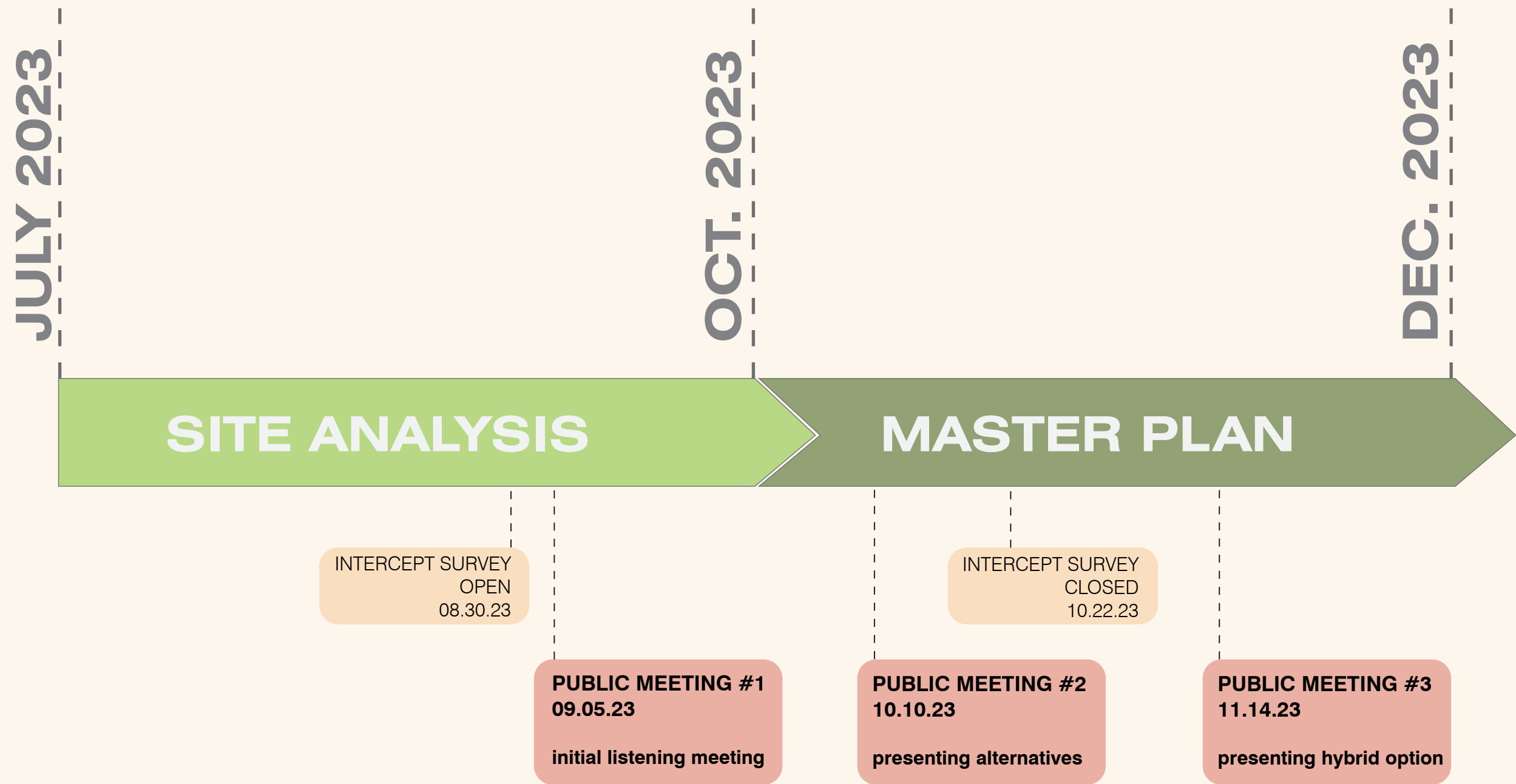
Instructions for Discussion

- Please keep your comments concise so we can hear from as many voices as possible.
- The chat is a valid/equal communication tool.

Friendly Reminders

- We're just getting started!- no decisions are being made tonight.
- This isn't your only opportunity to express your ideas and opinions.

next steps



next steps



additional information

- Recording and tonight's slide deck will be available at:
www.mass.gov/dcr/past-public-meetings
- If you have comments on this project:
 1. Submit online www.mass.gov/dcr/public-comment
 2. Deadline: Sunday, October 22, 2023
- If you wish to subscribe to a DCR general information or project-related listserv: contact DCR's Office of Community Relations via email at:
mass.parks@mass.gov