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Visitor-Use Management of Adirondack Forest Preserve

July 14, 2022

Kevin Prickett – APA
Josh Clague – DEC
John Schmid – DEC

Introduction and Background

Today's Updates:

1. ADK VUM Guidance
2. VUM Contract for High Peaks and Catskills
3. Desired Conditions and Standards
4. Monitoring Protocols
5. Project Spotlight: Ecological Scorecard

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Visitor-Use Management of Adirondack Forest Preserve

Guidance Team Members:

Karyn Richards, DEC

Josh Clague, DEC

Rick Weber, APA

Walt Linck, APA

Kevin Prickett, APA

Background

"…an assessment of the physical, biological, and social carrying capacity…with particular attention to portions (of land) …threatened by overuse in light of its resource limitations and its classification under the master plan."

- APSLMP, 1972-present

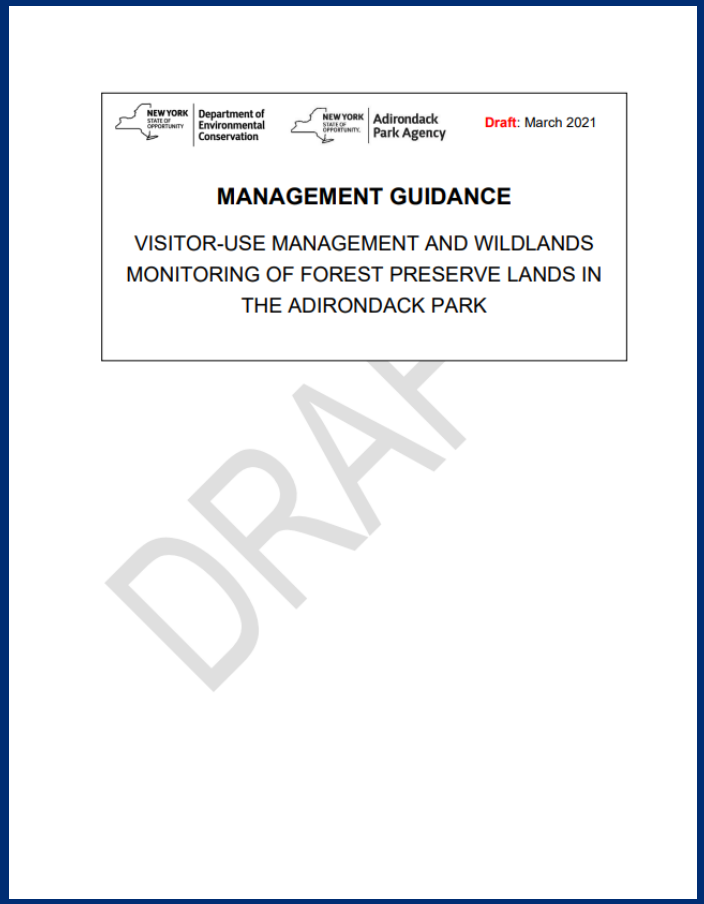
History of the Issue

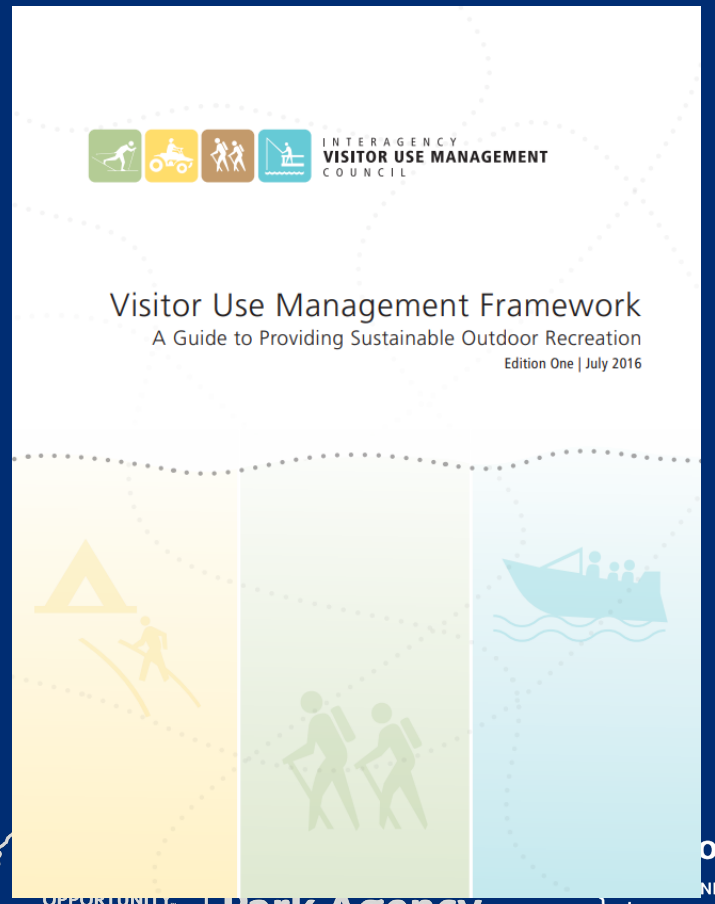
- "**Carrying capacity**" and "**limits of acceptable change**" have taken time to develop.
- 2015 - Boreas Ponds tract acquisition concluded multi-phased Finch-Pruyn deal
- 2018 - classification of tract, followed by UMP Amendments
- Interagency Visitor Use Management Council

History of the Issue - continued

- Unprecedented use in the High Peaks over last 5 years
- Parallel effort at Federal level has led to a Visitor Use Management Framework ("VUM") for Federal lands
- 2018 - APA/DEC staff team assigned to formalize concepts from UMP into a guidance document.

NYS DEC Visitor-Use Management Workbook





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Next Steps

This field season…

- Hardware (tablet) and software development and deployment
- Pilot projects
- Improving workbook based on lessons learned (both broad and specific)
- Further developing monitoring protocols, including field testing process and equipment

Next winter to check in again…

Next Steps

Seeking input…

- DEC and APA Staff welcome comments from the public to improve the guidance.
- This is not a formal public comment period with time limits.
- Comments should be directed to:

SLMP_Comments@apa.ny.gov

Public Comments

1. Process
2. Holistic Planning
3. Stakeholder Involvement
4. Engage Outside Expertise
5. Waterbody Carrying Capacity
6. Ongoing Monitoring

Project Planning

Name: Adirondack Visitor Use Management (AVUM)

Timeline: October 2021 – October 2024

Goal: To develop a system to assist with visitor use management on the Adirondack Forest Preserve as part of sustaining resources and ensuring quality visitor experiences.

Why:

- APSLMP
- Increase in impacts to resources and experiences
- Visitor Use Management Framework (VUMF) developed by the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council

Opportunities:

- Team approach
- Framework on managing visitor use
- Monitoring software
- Desired conditions

Out of Scope:

- Non-Forest Preserve visitor use problems
- Amendments to the APSLMP
- Purchasing equipment
- Hiring new staff
- Organizational culture change

Deliverables (key elements needed to be success in achieving the project goals):

- Visitor use management plan for the High Peaks Wilderness utilizing Federal VUM
- Adirondack framework for managing visitor use
- Monitoring protocols and software
- Desired conditions, including indicators and thresholds

Backers: Rob Davies, Megan Phillips

Project Manager: Kevin Prickett

Sub Team 1: High Peaks Wilderness IVUM Team (5-7)
Leader: Josh Clague
1. Rob Daley
2. Other Region 5 staff Pending RFP
3. Matt McNamara

Sub Team 2: Adirondack VUM
Leader: Josh Clague
1. Kirsten Seleen
2. Matt Nowak
3. Matt McNamara

Appendix Development

Sub Team 3: Desired Conditions (standards)
Leader: Josh Clague
1. Peter Frank
2. Matt McNamara
3. Eric Kasza
4. McCrea Burnham
5. Molly Breslin

Sub Team 4: Monitoring
Leader: John Schmid
1. Kirstin Seleen
2. Matt Nowak
3. Steve Guglielmi
4. Travis Acuna
5. Josh Clague
6. Rob Daley

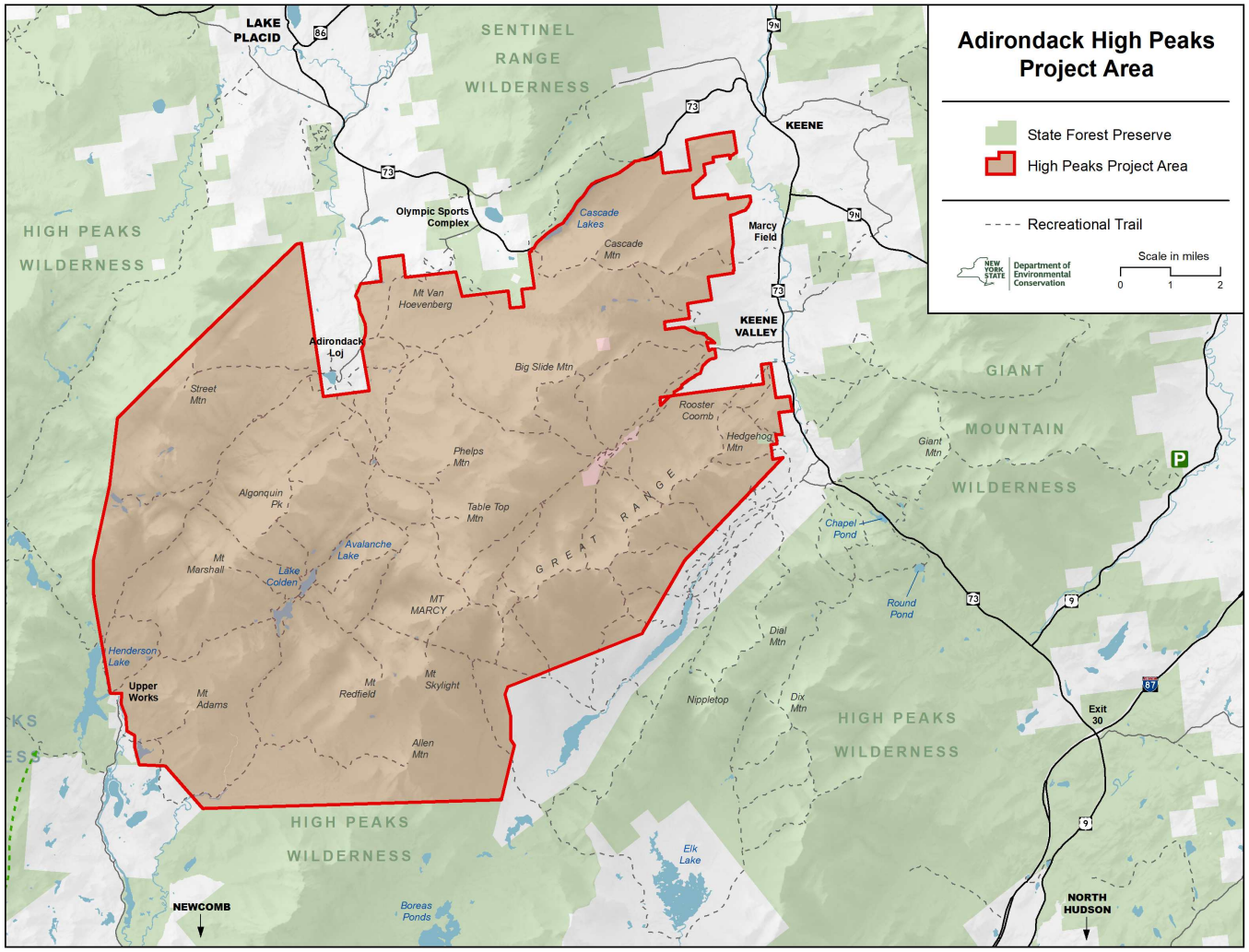
	A	B	C	D	E
1	2022				
2	*January*				
3					
4	3 - 7	10 - 14	17 - 21	24 - 28	
5			January 18 - Pre-meeting with Josh and Kevin	January 25 - Agree on outline, chart and work plan (Josh, Kevin and backers)	
6			January 19 - Send agenda for meeting on January 25 (Kevin)	January 28 - Meeting follow-up (Josh and Kevin) and outline next steps	
7			January 19 - Pre-meeting with respective supervisors about Friday, January 28 meeting (Josh and Kevin)		
8					
9					
10					
11					

VUM Contract

AKA :

"Professional Visitor Use Management (VUM) Planning Services for Highly-Visited Forest Preserve Regions"

VUM Contract



High Peaks Project Location

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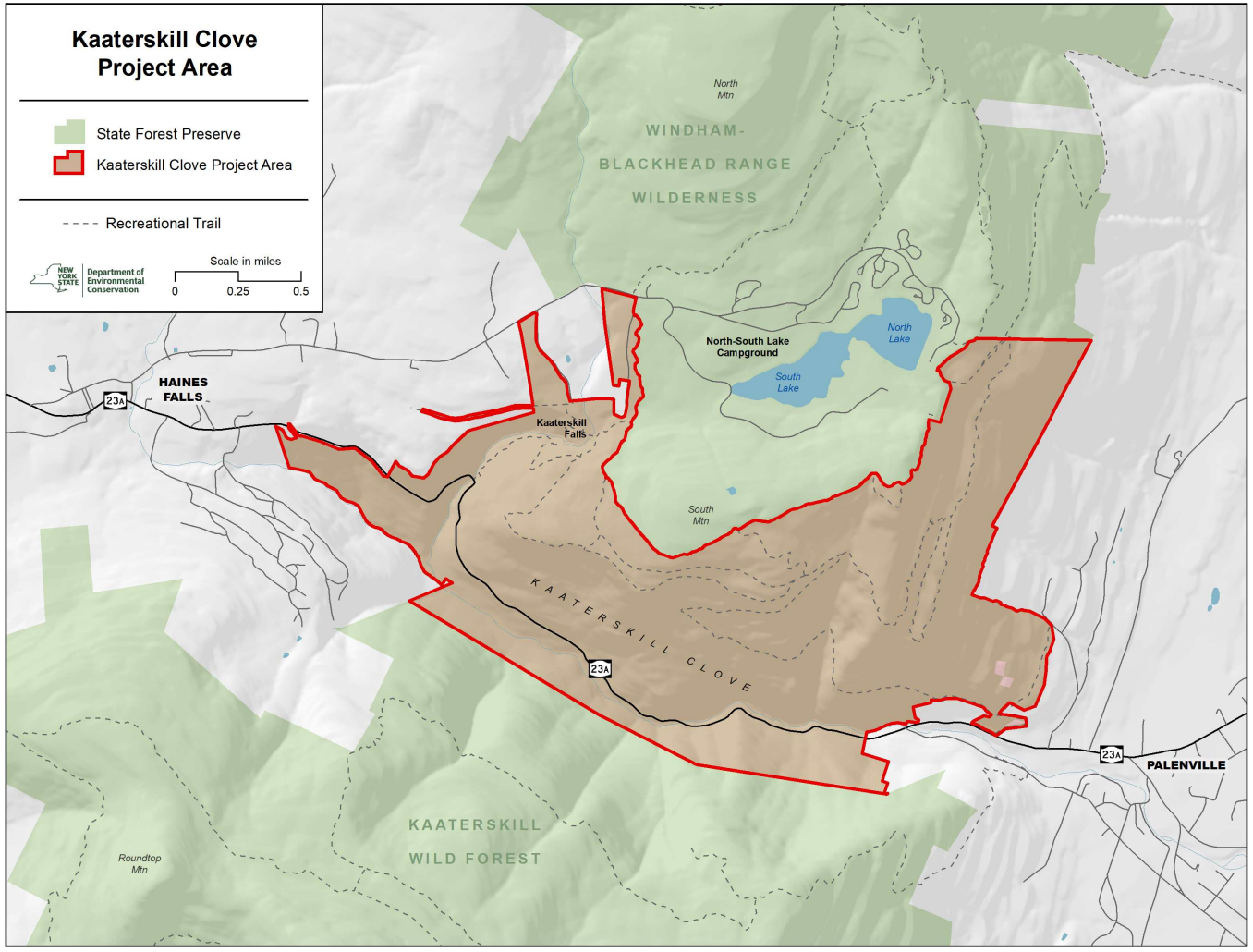
VUM Contract



Catskills
Project Location

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VUM Contract – Important Dates

- Optional pre-proposal web conference: **July 27, 2022, at 10:00 AM**
- Deadline for questions: **July 29, 2022**
- DEC responses to questions will be provided by: **August 2, 2022**

- Deadline for bids: **August 15, 2022, at 11:00 AM**

VUM Contract – Contact Information

Josh Clague
Section Leader, Forest Preserve Policy and Planning
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway, 5th Floor, Albany, NY 12233-4254
(518) 408-5508
josh.clague@dec.ny.gov

Desired Conditions and Standards

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6. Rob Daley

Monitoring Protocols

Monitoring Protocols

- Primitive Tent Site Conditions
- Trail Conditions
- Visitor Use Estimation
- Visitor Experience
- Ecological Health

Monitoring Protocols

- Primitive Tent Site Conditions — Physical
- Trail Conditions — Physical
- Visitor Use Estimation — Social
- Visitor Experience — Social
- Ecological Health — Biological

Management of visitors

- building a foundation;
- defining management direction (i.e. desired conditions, appropriate visitor activities, facilities and services; and indicators and thresholds);
- identifying management strategies (i.e. documenting the differences between existing and desired conditions, identifying strategies to achieve desired conditions and developing monitoring), and
- implementing, monitoring, evaluating and adjusting.

Managing Carrying Capacity

Indicators and standards of quality

Monitoring and management

What is Monitoring?

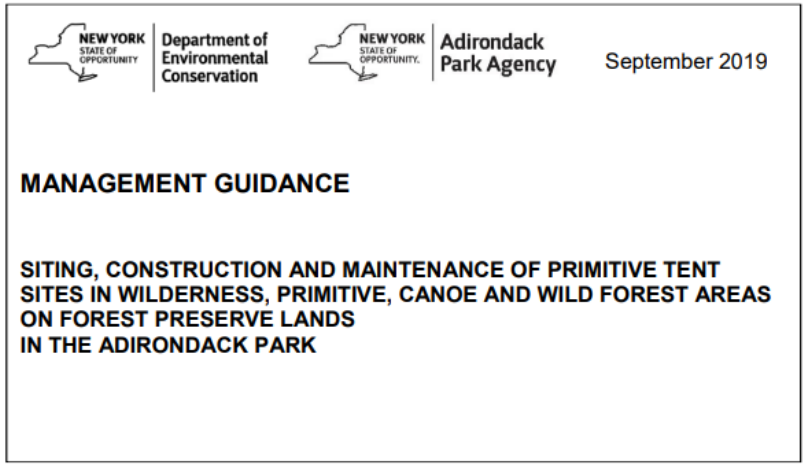
(1) selection of indicators, along with establishment of thresholds or objectives, and any needed triggers;

(2) routine, systematic observations or data collection of the indicators over time; and

(3) documentation and analysis of the observations or data in relation to the thresholds, triggers, or objectives

Indicators Thresholds

Indicator: Percentage of vegetation cover
Standard: 50% vegetation cover



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September 2019

MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

SITING, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF PRIMITIVE TENT SITES IN WILDERNESS, PRIMITIVE, CANOE AND WILD FOREST AREAS ON FOREST PRESERVE LANDS IN THE ADIRONDACK PARK

Primitive Tent Site Location

Primitive Tent Site locations are chosen for the enjoyment of the visitor and protection of natural resources.

Primitive Tent Sites shall be out of sight and sound and generally ¼ mile from any other Primitive Tent Site or lean-to. Where severe constraints prevent attainment of the guideline for separation of generally ¼ mile lesser separation may be considered through the UMP process on site by site basis.

5

Primitive Tent Site Size Limits

Camping at Primitive Tent Sites may have social and ecological impacts. With respect to ecological impacts, trees can be compromised through root exposure, cutting limbs and maiming of trunks. Vegetation may be decreased, and species composition could be changed. Compacted soils might limit the health and vigor of plants and prevent them from growing. Camping also can have aesthetic impacts, including decreasing screening between sites and shade, and diminishing the wild and undeveloped character of the area

With respect to the size limit for a designated Primitive Tent Site, they will provide space for not more than three tents and will not exceed 1,200 square feet in size for each site. 1200 square feet is a measurement of the ground surface area exhibiting impacts from visitor use of the campsite as measured with the Primitive Tent Site monitoring methodology.

Primitive Tent Site Monitoring Manual

Planning

Inventories can be conducted in a single field season or can be done over several seasons.

Primitive tent site monitoring must be completed when green leafy vegetation on non-woody plants is present (e.g. ferns, herbaceous plants). Recommended dates for primitive tent site assessments are after June 1 and before October 1. The assessment can be completed in any kind of weather; however, data entry using a touch pad in rainy conditions is difficult.

The time to complete each assessment depends on several different factors, including: experience, organization and staff. An experienced person or a pair of a people who have completed numerous assessments can complete an assessment within 10-15 minutes. If you have limited experience with assessing tent sites, it is best to utilize two people to work through the assessment steps together.

DRAFT

Day Before Field Visit

Preparation

Identify the locations of the campsites that require an assessment and develop a plan to visit these sites, for example: put together driving directions, print a map of the area, and check the weather conditions for the date of the site visit. In addition, organize the field visit logistics, for example: sign out a vehicle, put together a backpack of personal equipment (e.g. rain gear) needed to be in the field, and identify which trailhead you will park at or which trail will you use.

Hardware preparation

Prior to the beginning of field work, obtain the following:

- ☐ Smart phone or tablet - The following are a few preferred alternatives: Samsung Galaxy Tab A 10.1, Samsung Galaxy S6 or a Samsung Galaxy Tab S2.
- ☐ Range Finder - The following are a few preferred alternatives: TruPulse 200 or TruPulse 360.
- ☐ Range Finder User's Manual

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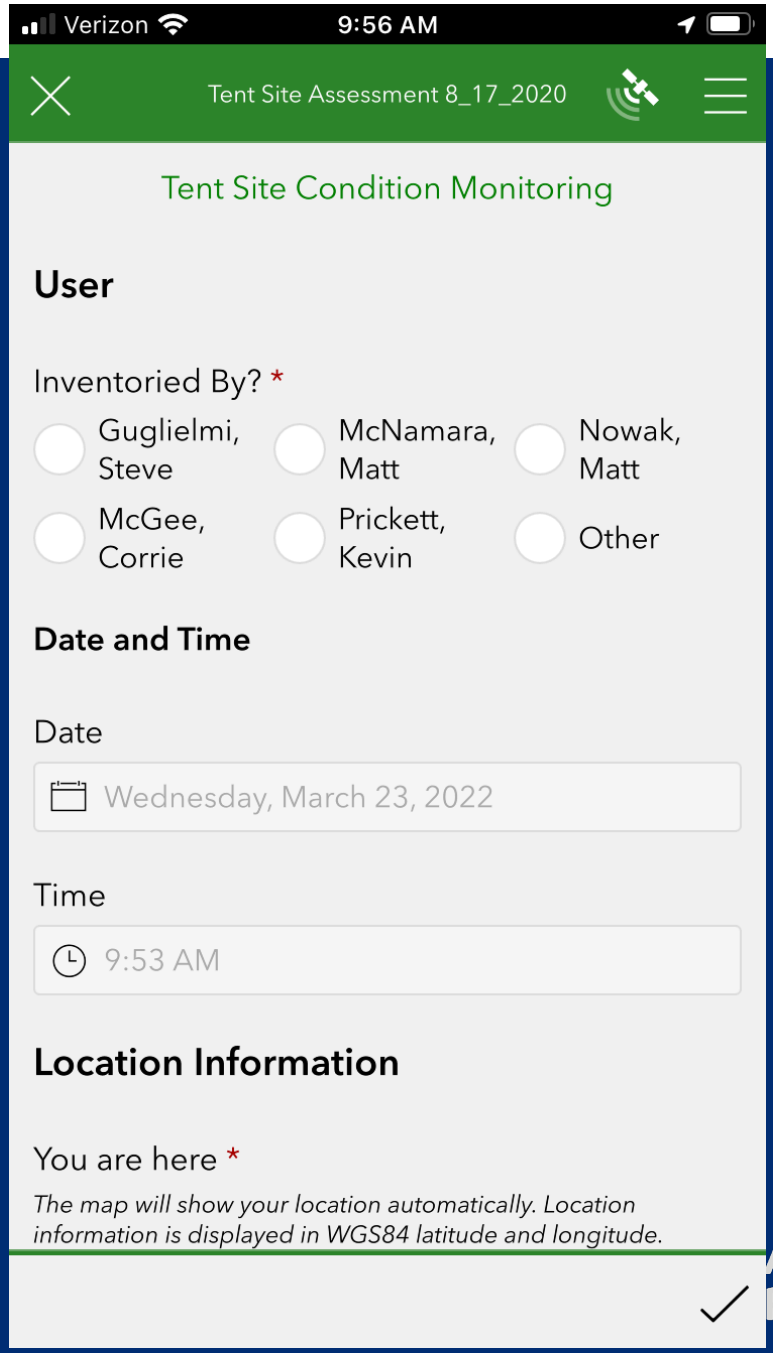
Recording Distance of Flagged Boundaries

- Once the boundaries are flagged, record the distances from the reference cone to the tent site boundary into Survey123 using the following process:
- Person 1 stands at the cone.
- Person 2 stands at the zero flag with shoulder facing person 1. Person 2's shoulder should be on the same plane as the flag.
- Person 1 uses the range finder to measure the distance. If you are using the range finder to determine distance, use the HD mode (horizontal distance mode).
- Person 1 should target person 2 standing at the flagged boundary. Use the cross hairs in the range finder and target person 2's shoulder. It is not a good idea to shoot the range finder into a person's eyes.
- Using Survey123, person 2 records the distance to the campsite boundary at zero degrees as identified by person 1
- Work in a clockwise fashion measuring and recording the campsite boundary distances into Survey123. Round distances to the nearest half foot increments (e.g. enter 12.5 for a length of 12 feet 4 inches **or** 13 for a length of 13 foot 2 inches).
- If a large feature such as a tree or boulder prevents you from using one of the provided azimuths, adjust the azimuth so that the distance from the reference point to the campsite boundary is uninterrupted. Note the change in azimuth in the notes section at the end of the survey.



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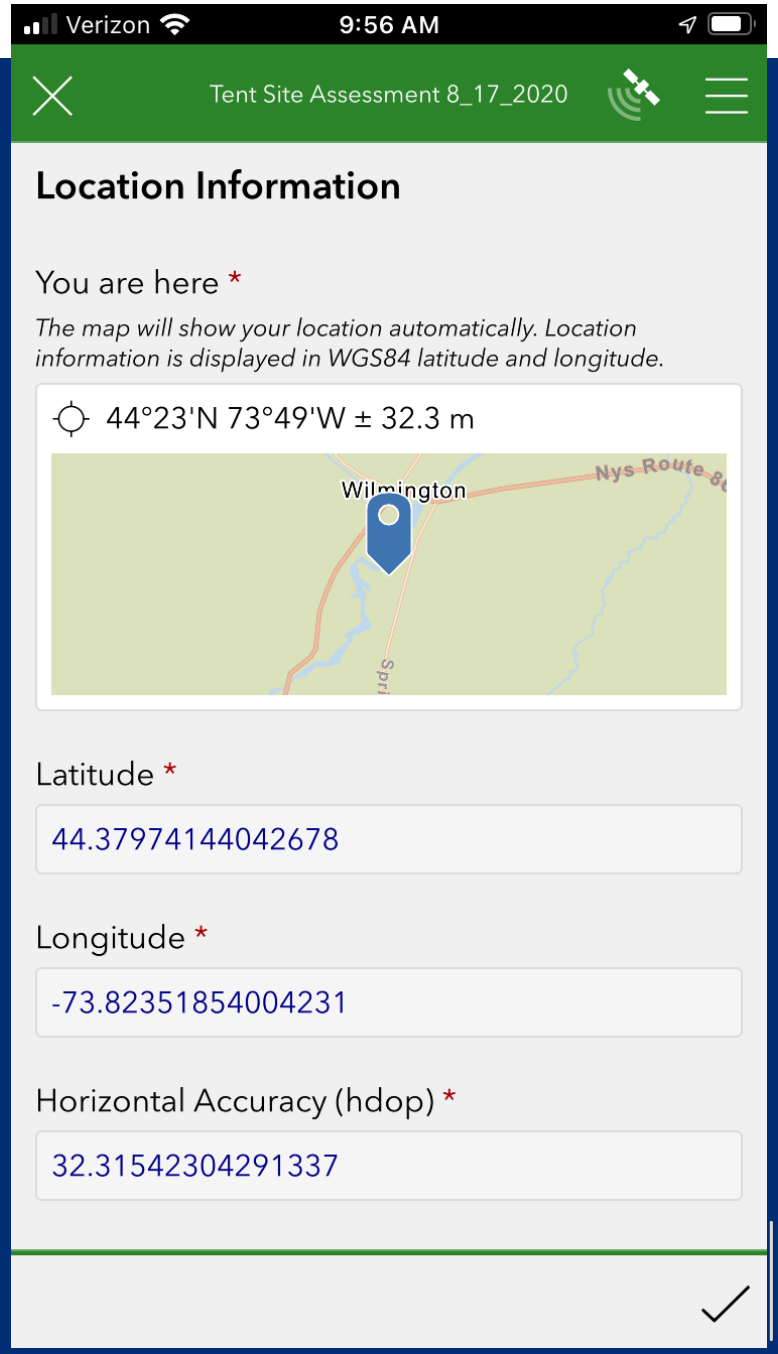
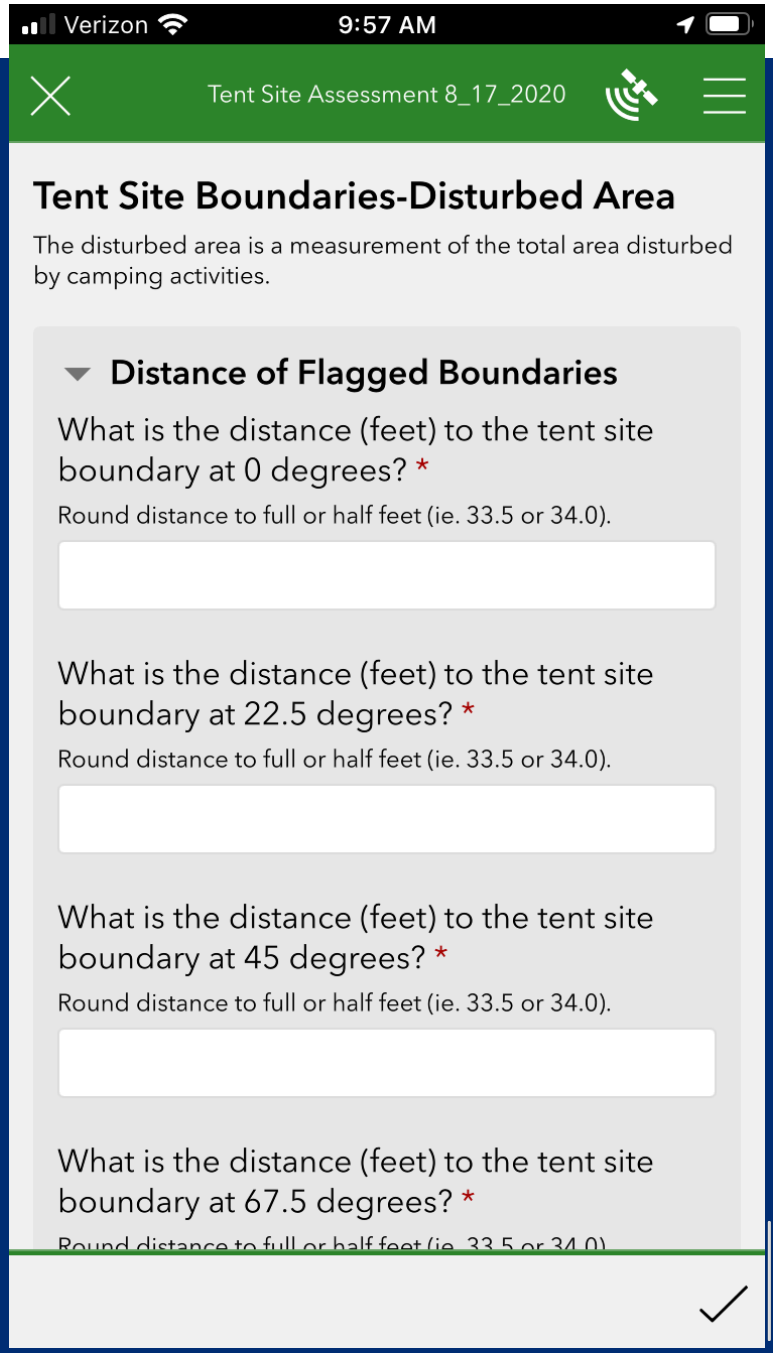
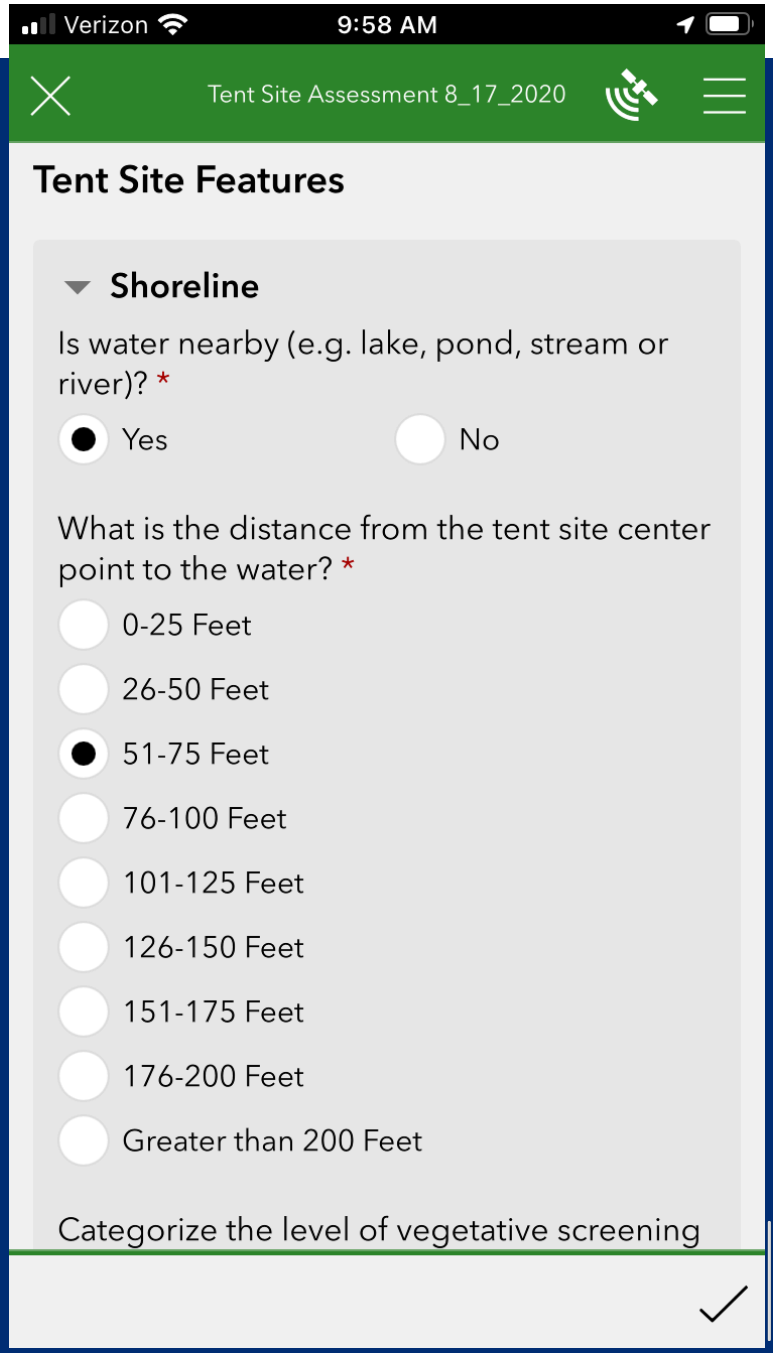
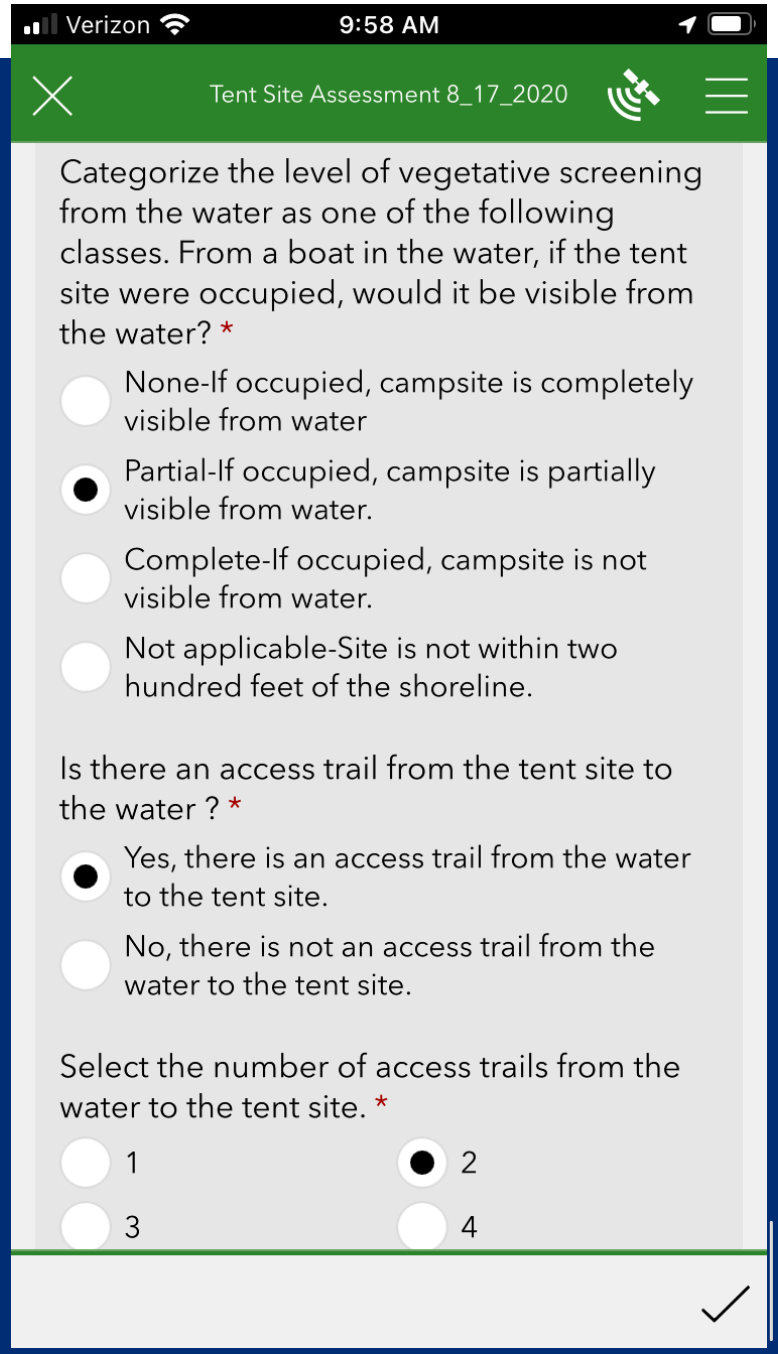

Verizon
9:56 AM
Tent Site Assessment 8_17_2020
Location Information
You are here *
The map will show your location automatically. Location information is displayed in WGS84 latitude and longitude.
44°23'N 73°49'W ± 32.3 m
Wilmington
Nys Route 8
Latitude *
44.37974144042678
Longitude *
-73.82351854004231
Horizontal Accuracy (hdop) *
32.31542304291337


Verizon
9:57 AM
Tent Site Assessment 8_17_2020
Tent Site Boundaries-Disturbed Area
The disturbed area is a measurement of the total area disturbed by camping activities.
Distance of Flagged Boundaries
What is the distance (feet) to the tent site boundary at 0 degrees? *
Round distance to full or half feet (ie. 33.5 or 34.0).
What is the distance (feet) to the tent site boundary at 22.5 degrees? *
Round distance to full or half feet (ie. 33.5 or 34.0).
What is the distance (feet) to the tent site boundary at 45 degrees? *
Round distance to full or half feet (ie. 33.5 or 34.0).
What is the distance (feet) to the tent site boundary at 67.5 degrees? *


Verizon
9:58 AM
Tent Site Assessment 8_17_2020
Tent Site Features
Shoreline
Is water nearby (e.g. lake, pond, stream or river)? *
Yes
No
What is the distance from the tent site center point to the water? *
0-25 Feet
26-50 Feet
51-75 Feet
76-100 Feet
101-125 Feet
126-150 Feet
151-175 Feet
176-200 Feet
Greater than 200 Feet
Categorize the level of vegetative screening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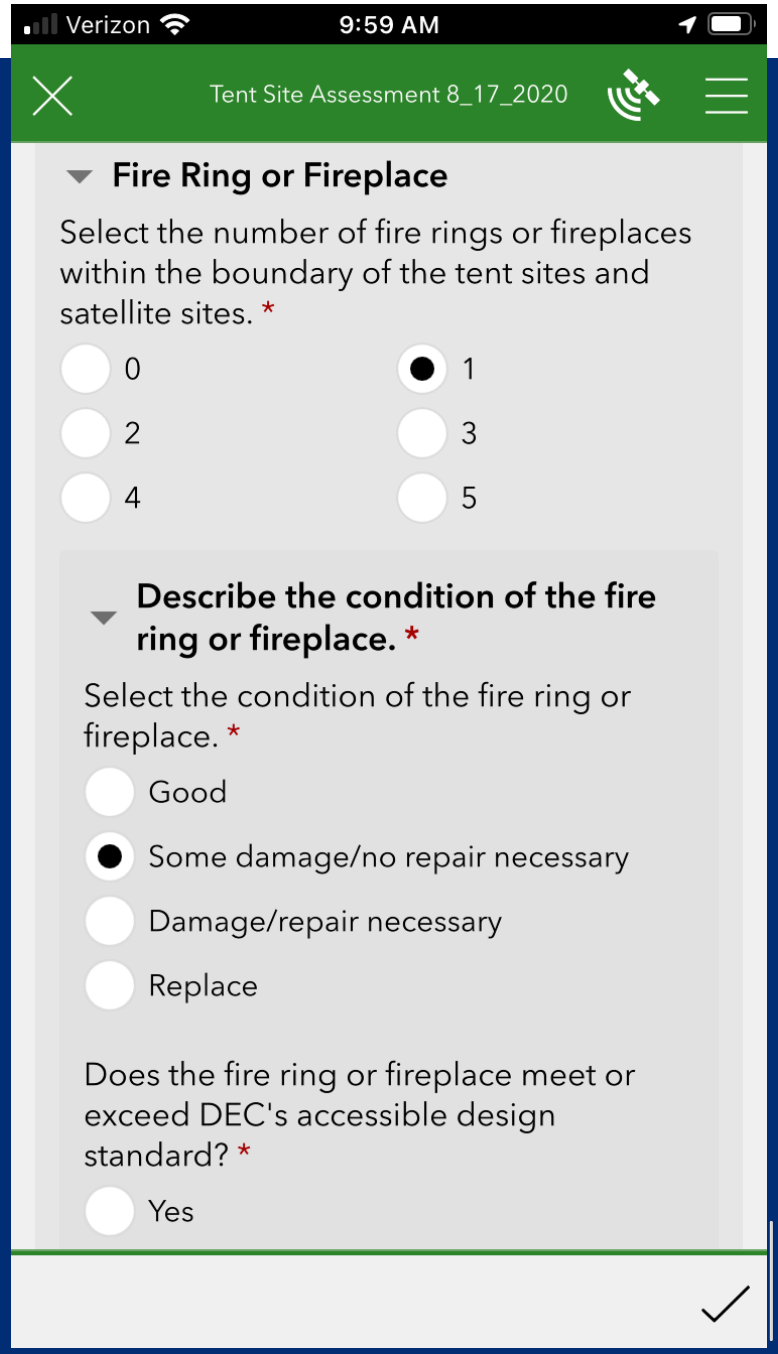
Tent Site Assessment 8_17_2020
Categorize the level of vegetative screening from the water as one of the following classes. From a boat in the water, if the tent site were occupied, would it be visible from the water? *
None-If occupied, campsite is completely visible from water
Partial-If occupied, campsite is partially visible from water.
Complete-If occupied, campsite is not visible from water.
Not applicable-Site is not within two hundred feet of the shoreline.
Is there an access trail from the tent site to the water ? *
Yes, there is an access trail from the water to the tent site.
No, there is not an access trail from the water to the tent site.
Select the number of access trails from the water to the tent site. *
1
2
3
4


Verizon
9:59 AM
Tent Site Assessment 8_17_2020
Fire Ring or Fireplace
Select the number of fire rings or fireplaces within the boundary of the tent sites and satellite sites. *
0
1
2
3
4
5
Describe the condition of the fire ring or fireplace. *
Select the condition of the fire ring or fireplace. *
Good
Some damage/no repair necessary
Damage/repair necessary
Replace
Does the fire ring or fireplace meet or exceed DEC's accessible design standard? *
Yes

https://adirondack.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1

Home ▾ Tent Site Map

Open in new Map Viewer | New Map ▾ | Kevin (APA) ▾

Details | Add ▾ | Edit | Basemap | Save ▾ | Share | Print ▾ | Measure | Bookmarks | Find address or place

About | Content | Legend

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- [x] Adirondack Forest Preserve Primitive Tent Site Assessment 8 17 2020
- [x] Adirondack Forest Preserve Primitive Tent Site Assessment
- [ ] Social Trails
- [ ] Number of Fire Rings
- [ ] Tent Site Condition Class
- [ ] Tent Site Size
- [ ] Human Waste
- [ ] Privy
- [ ] Size and Class - Small Scale
- [ ] Size and Class - Large Scale
- [ ] LowRes
- ▸ Topographic
- service a2027ba37149449581901545c798d6cc - shoreline disturbance 1
- service a2027ba37149449581901545c798d6cc - number fire ring1
- service a2027ba37149449581901545c798d6cc - number leanto1
- service a2027ba37149449581901545c798d6cc - number privy1
- service a2027ba37149449581901545c798d6cc - number table1
- service a2027ba37149449581901545c798d6cc - accessible tentpad 1
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- service d5599f38ef894351982217be305396d4 -

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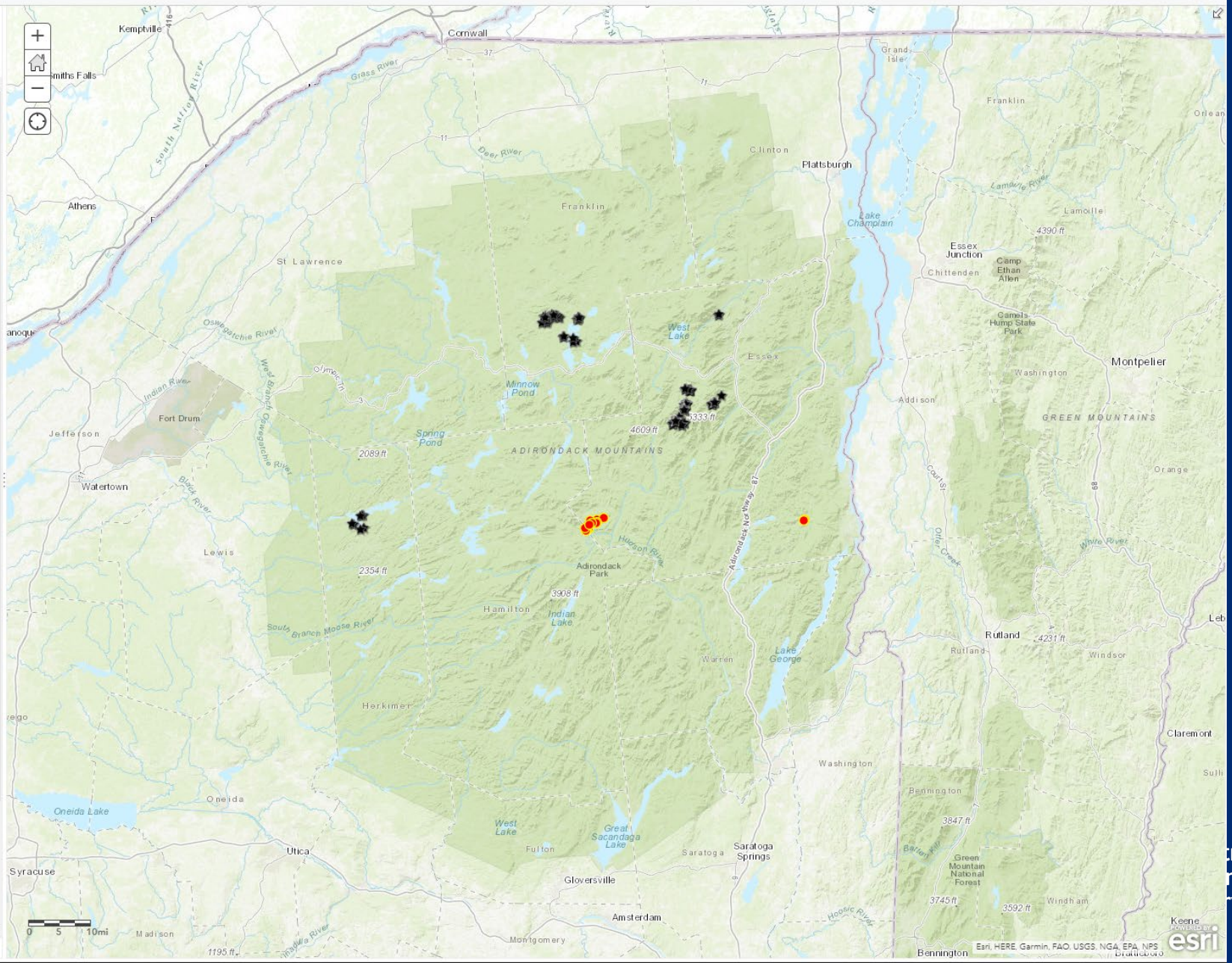

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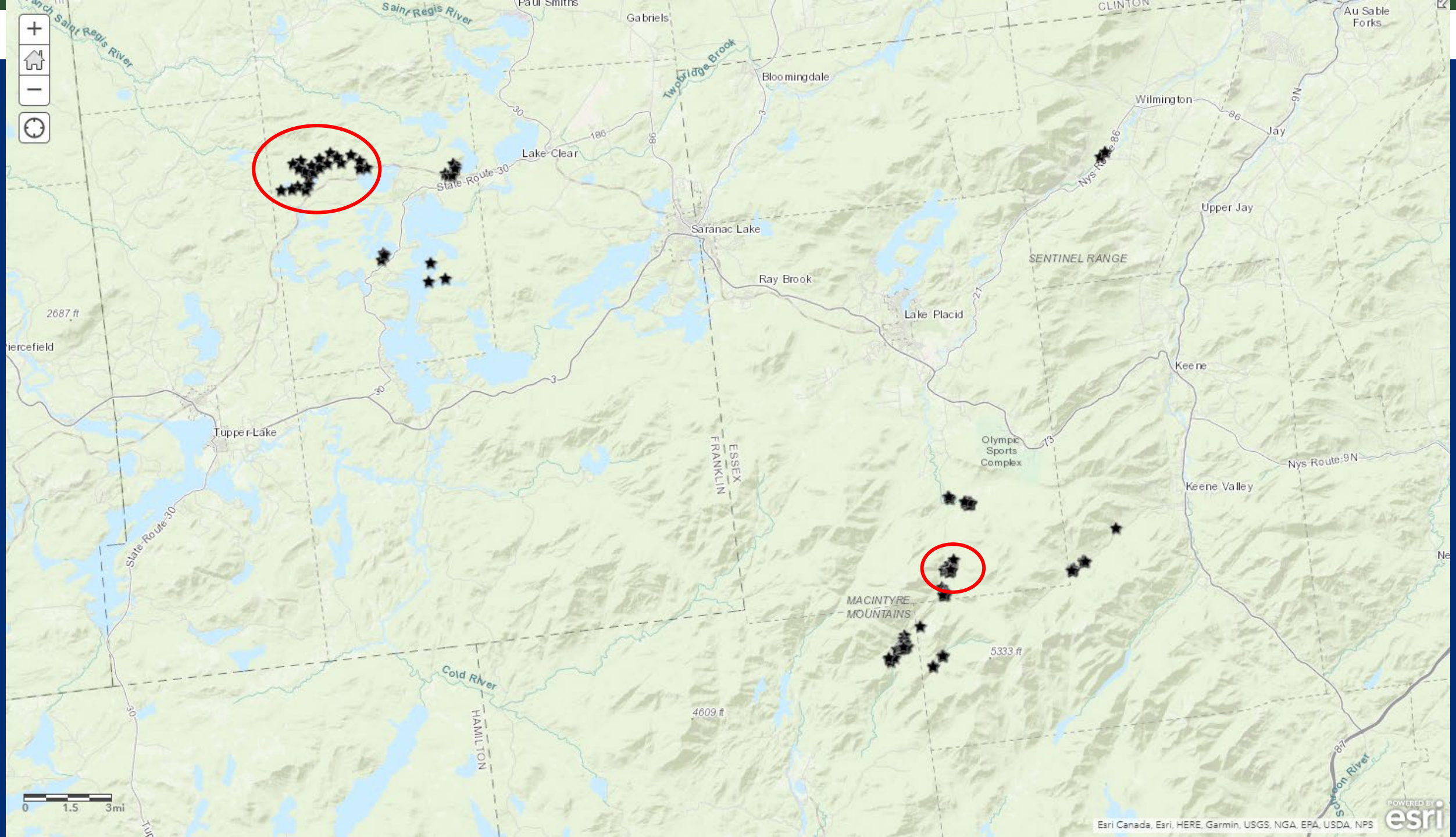
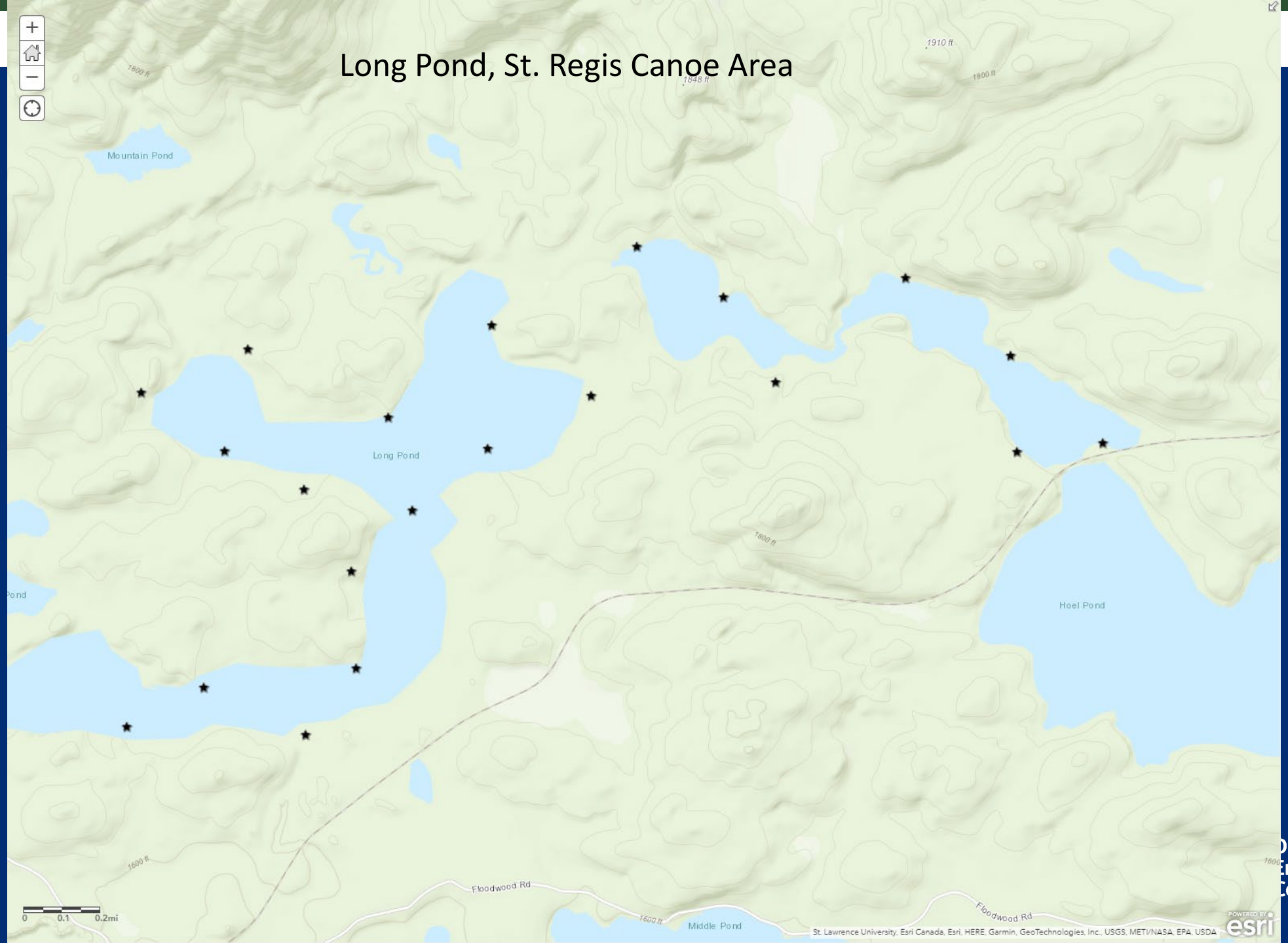

Saint Regis River
Paul Smiths
Gabriels
Twobridge Brook
Bloomingdale
CLINTON
Au Sable Forks
Wilmington
Jay
Upper Jay
Lake Clear
State Route 30
Saranac Lake
Nys Route 86
SENTINEL RANGE
Ray Brook
Lake Placid
2687 ft
Tupper Lake
ESSEX
FRANKLIN
Olympic Sports Complex
Keene
Keene Valley
Nys Route 9N
MACINTYRE MOUNTAINS
5333 ft
Cold River
4609 ft
HAMILTON
0 1.5 3mi
Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS
esri

Long Pond, St. Regis Canoe Area



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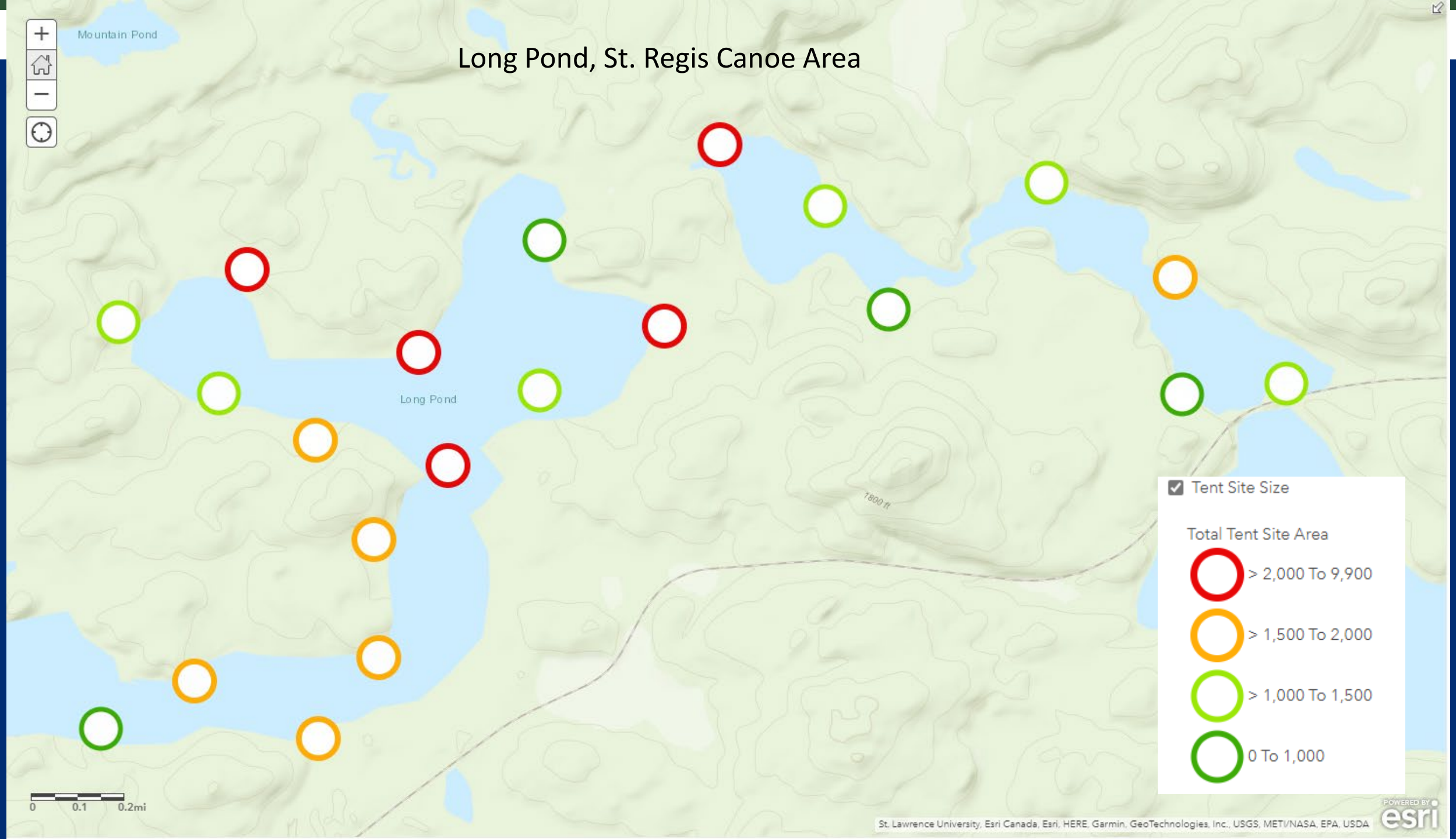
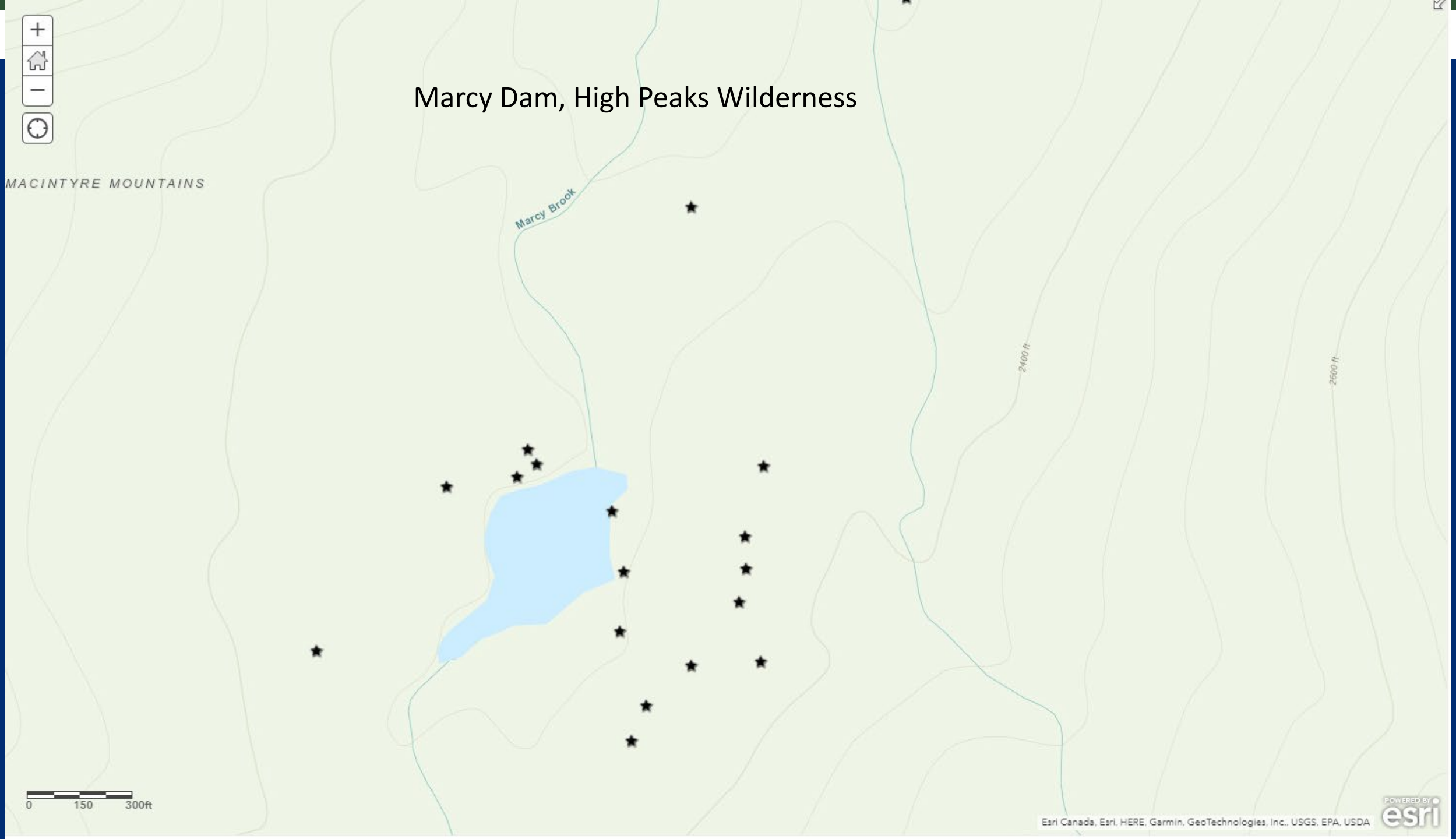


Marcy Dam, High Peaks Wilderness



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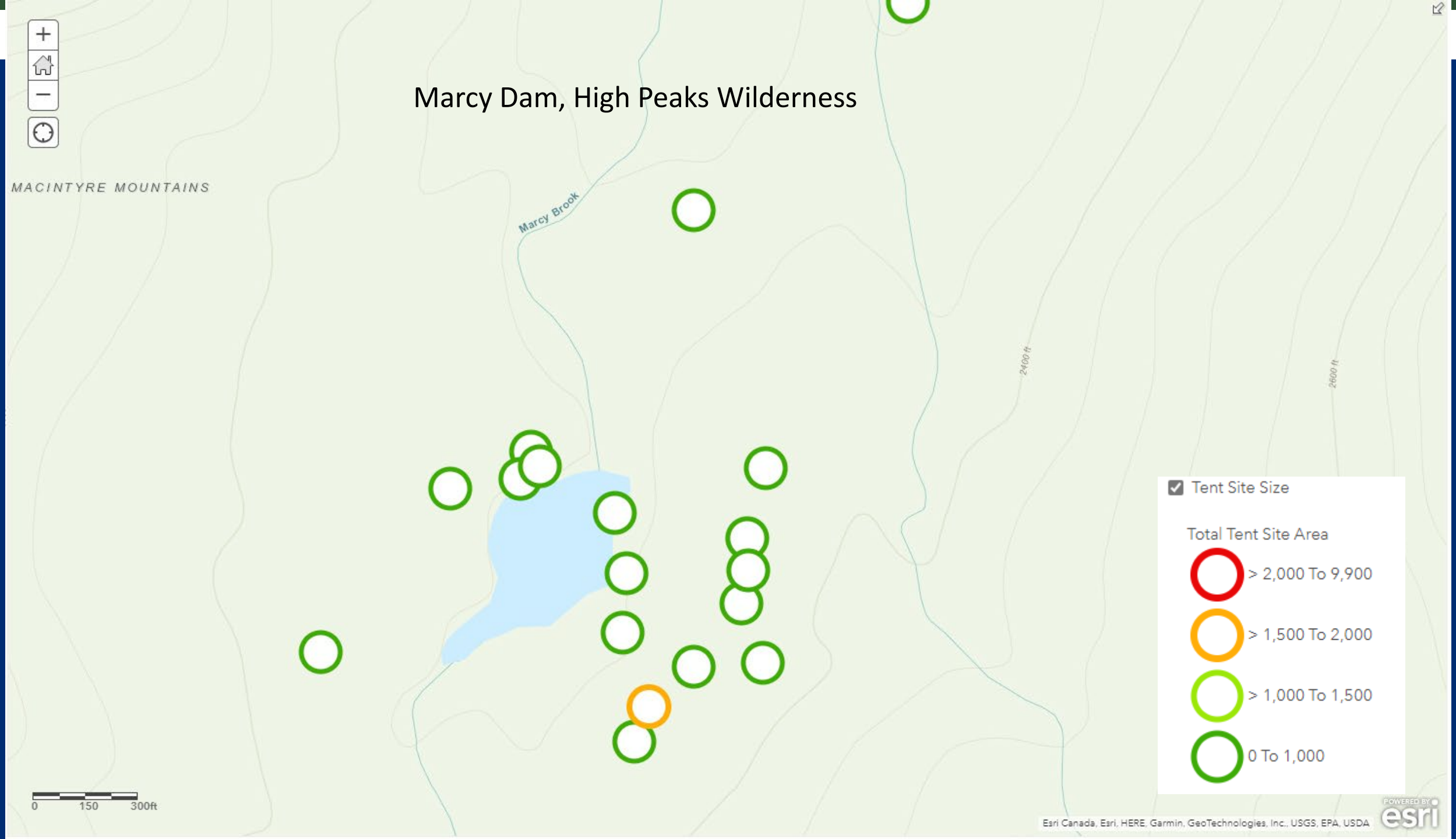

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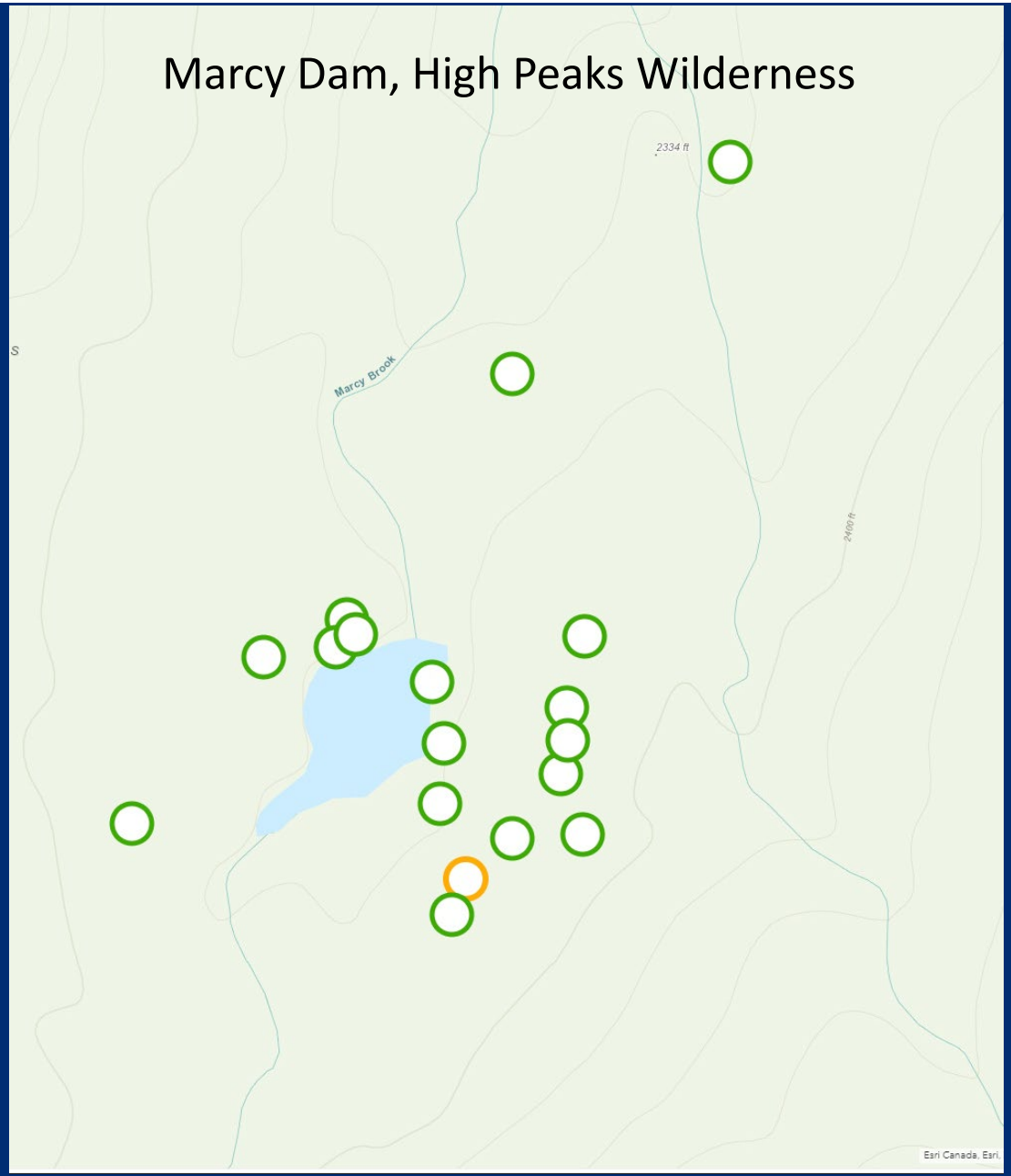

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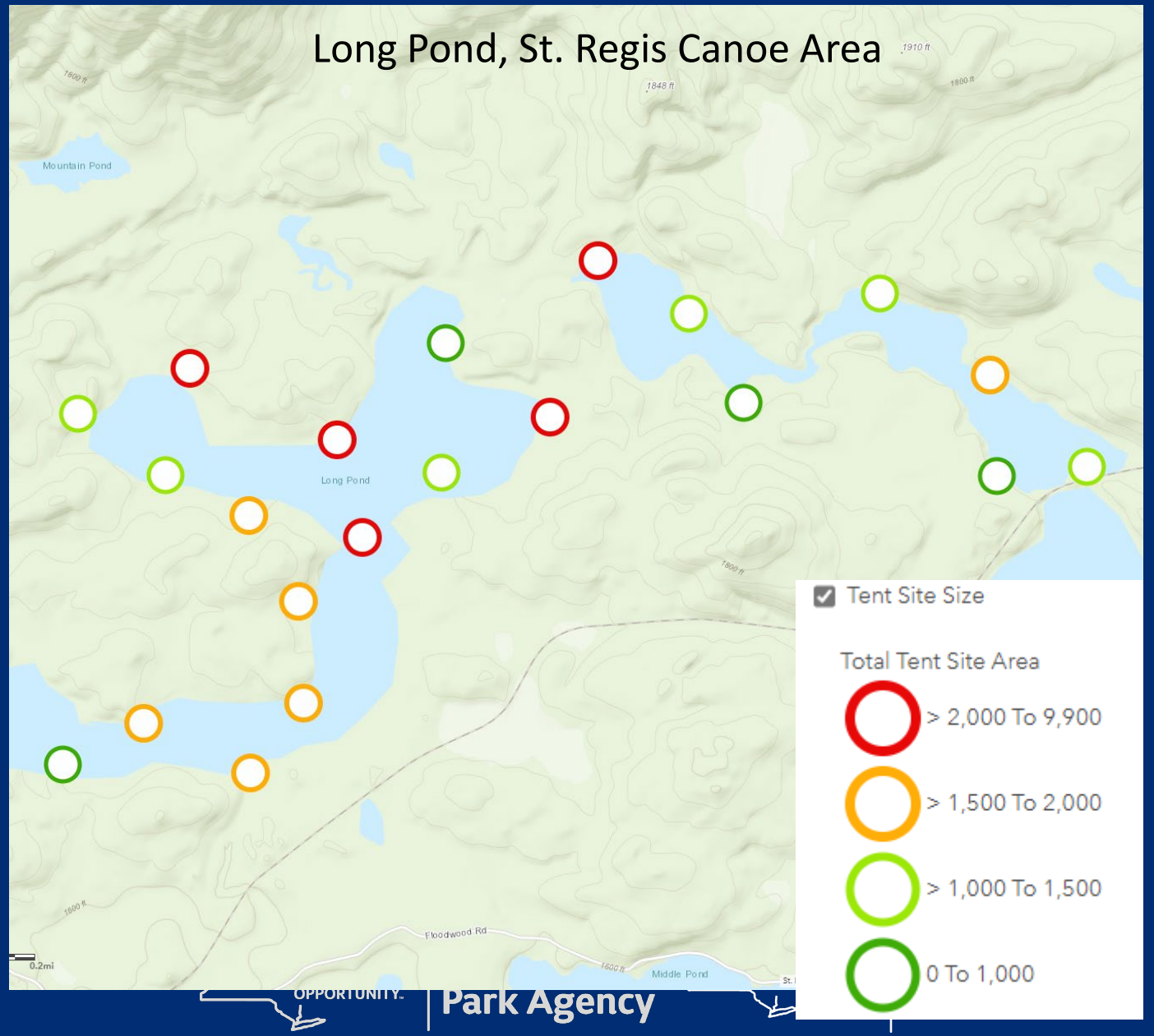
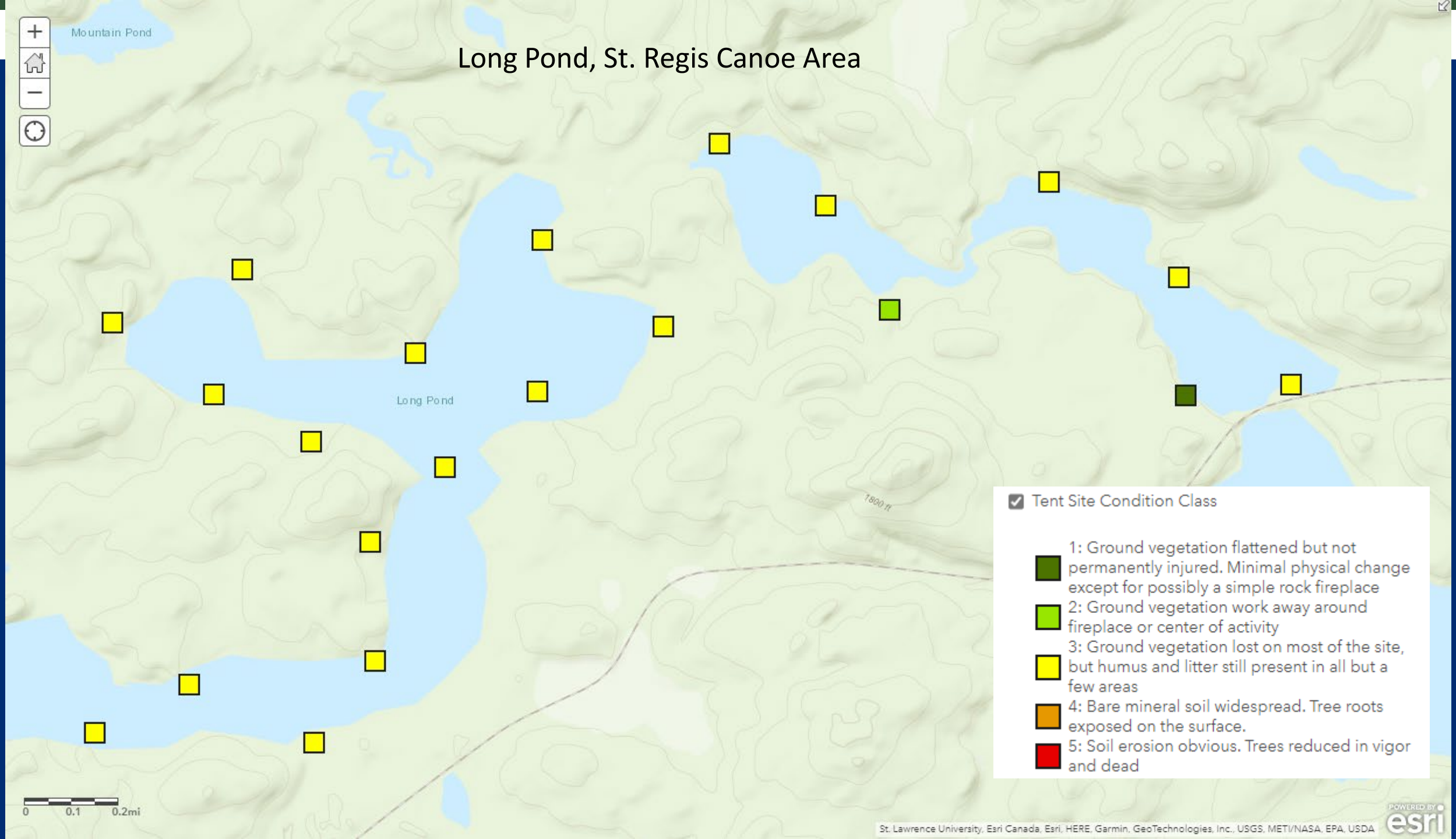


Long Pond, St. Regis Canoe Area



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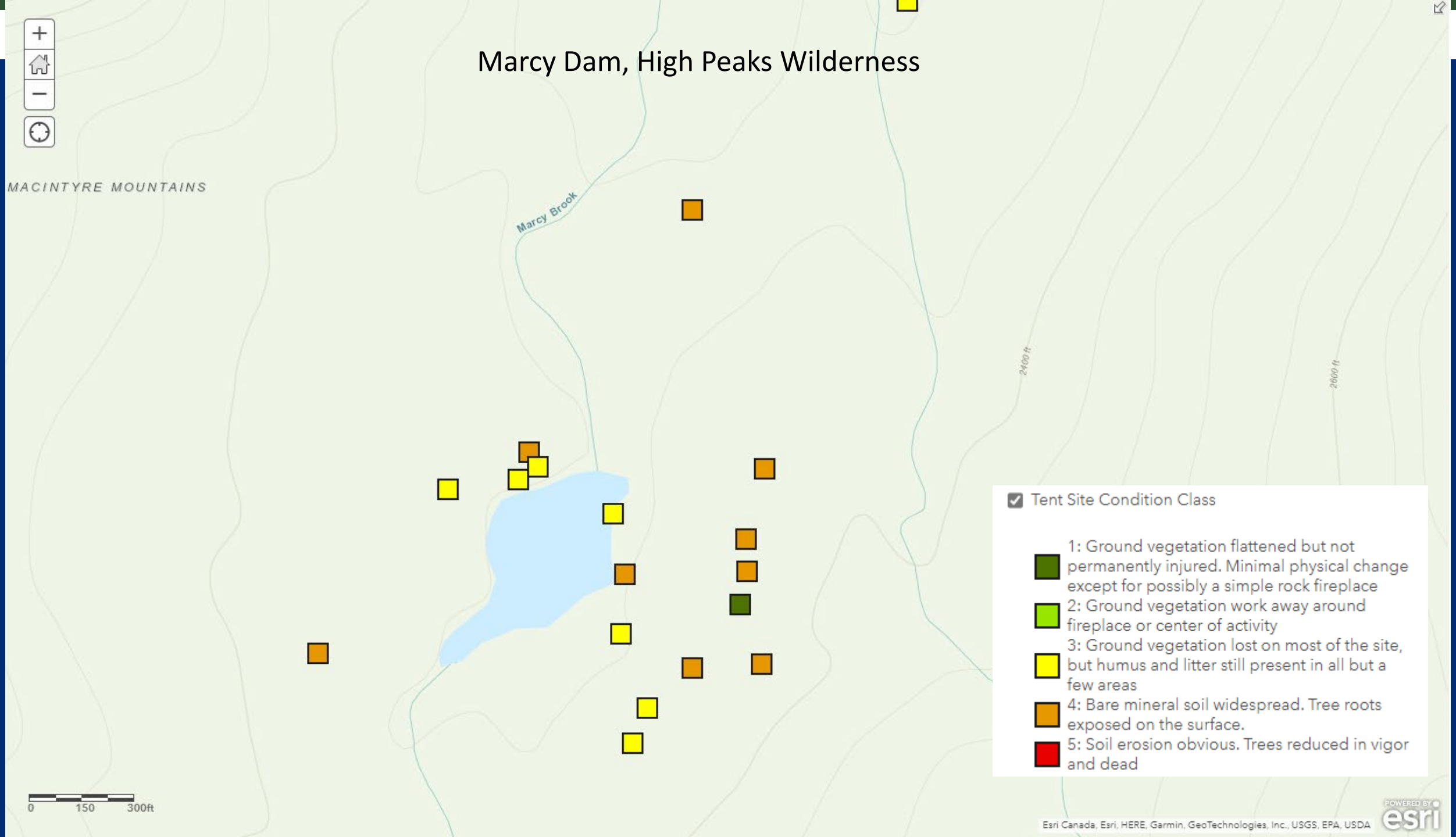
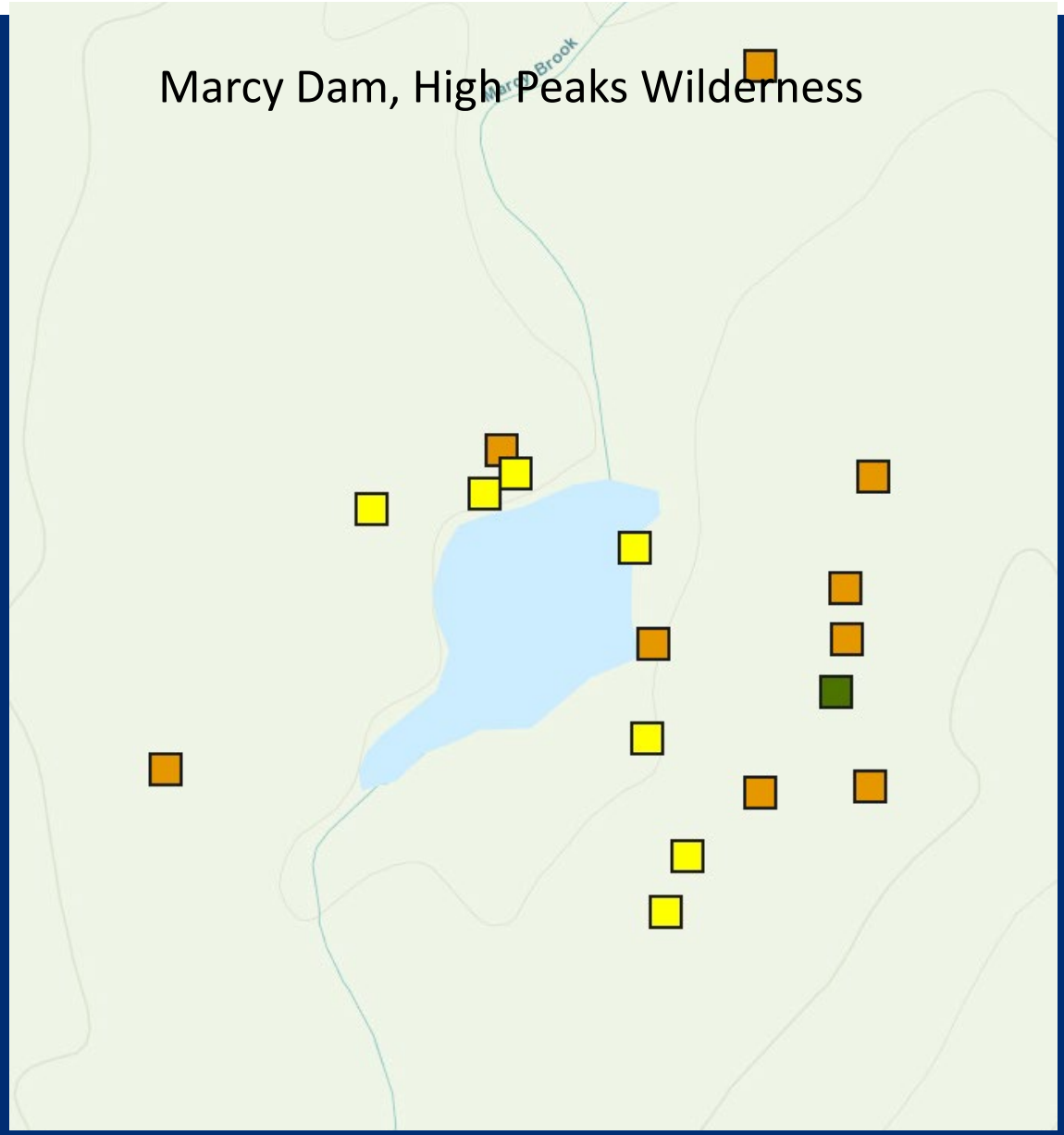
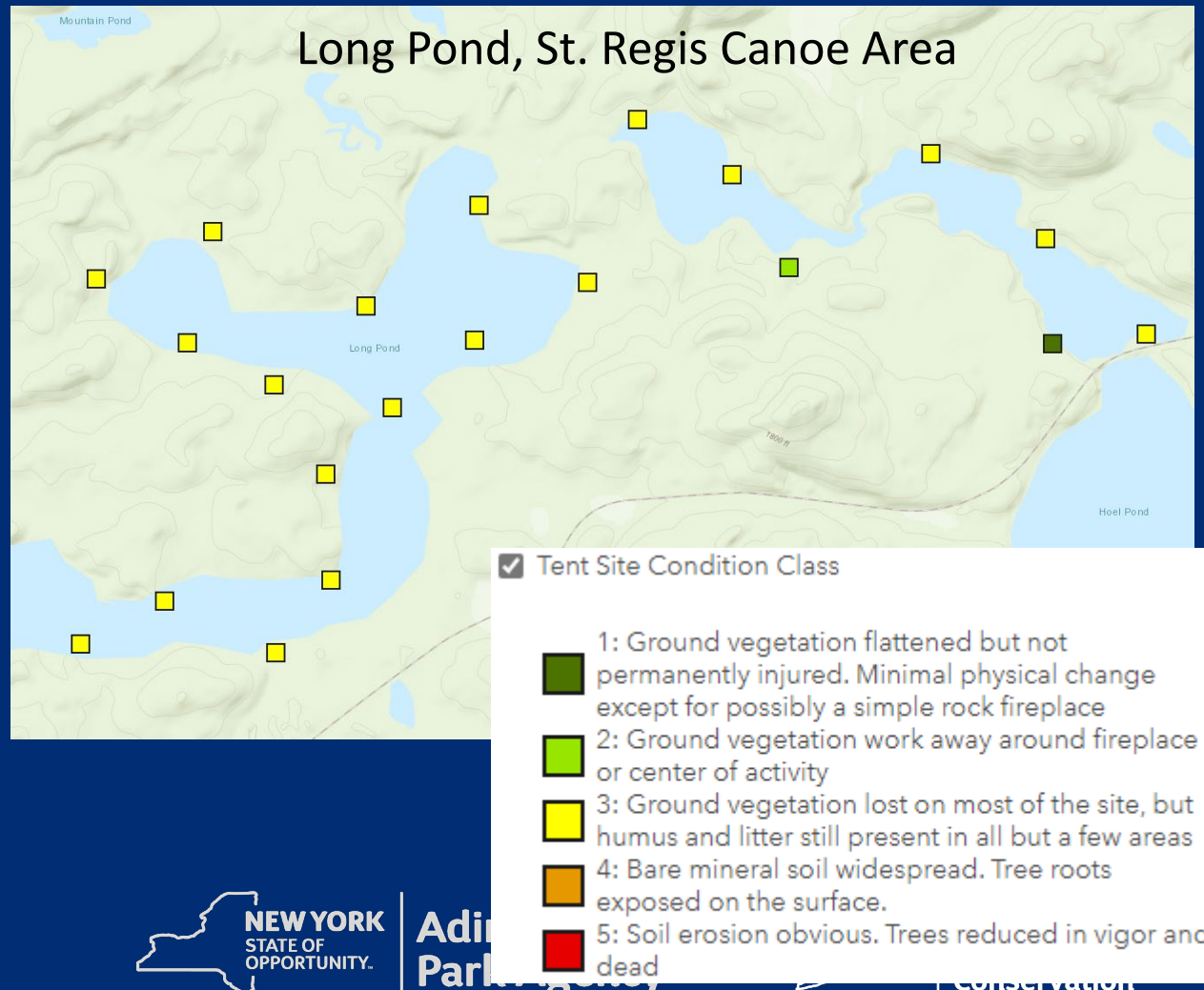


Tent Site Condition Class





https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/apa/TentSiteAssessment/default.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fsites%2Fapa...

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Primitive Tent Site Assessment Project Page EDIT LINKS

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Name	Modified	Modified By
Primitive	September 14, 2020	Prickett, Kevin J (APA)
Wilderness	September 3, 2019	Prickett, Kevin J (APA)
WildForest	September 14, 2020	Prickett, Kevin J (APA)

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Prickett, Kevin J (APA)
Interesting article on assessing campsites in the Kenai Fjords National Park - https://www.nps.gov/articles/aps-v10-i1-c8.htm
Wednesday, September 4, 2019 Like Reply

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Data Collection and Management

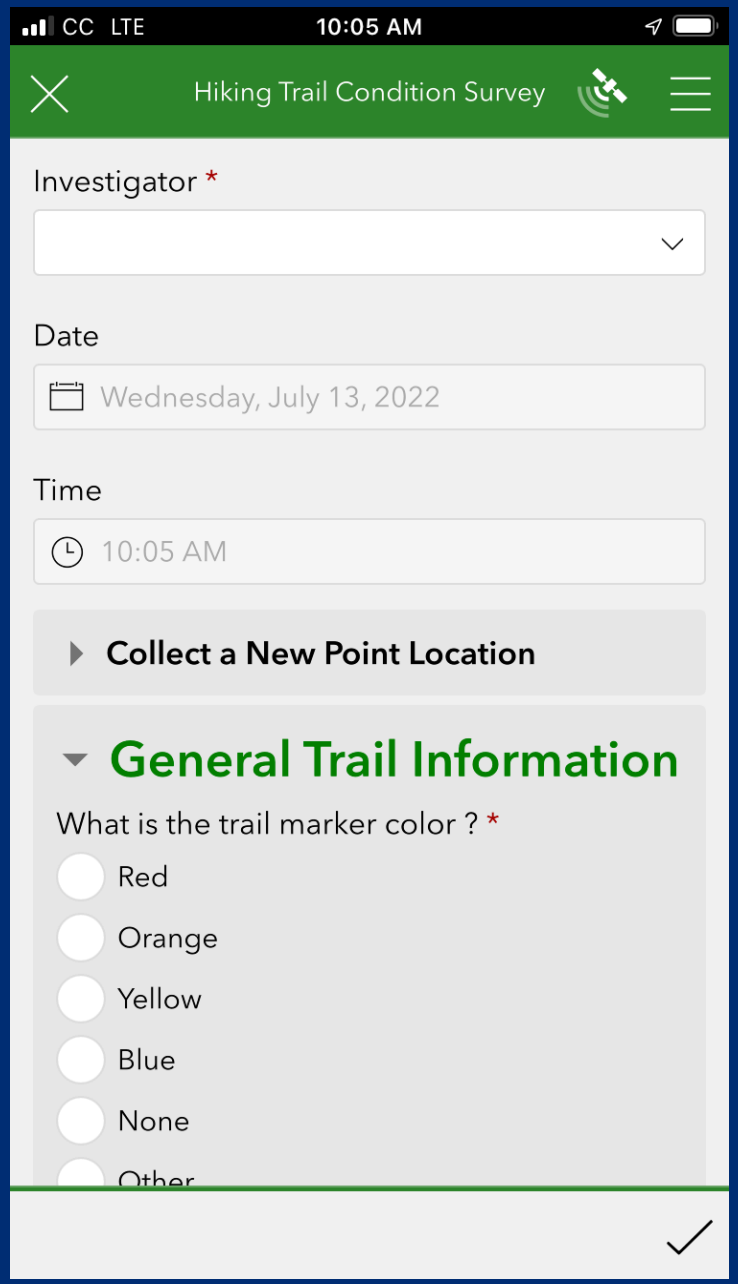
- Hardware
- Instructions and guidance
- Software Development
- Data Management

DEC Field Data Collection

- Ambition: from independent (office or individual) field data collection to an augmented centralized, standardized, and accessible GIS system
- DEC and Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) - New Hardware - iPads
- Developing mobile device field forms: parking lot surveys, informal trails, and trail conditions (and Kevin's primitive tent site form)
- Still developing a workflow: desktop and field forms to central database
- Large back-end database with customizable/queryable deliverables

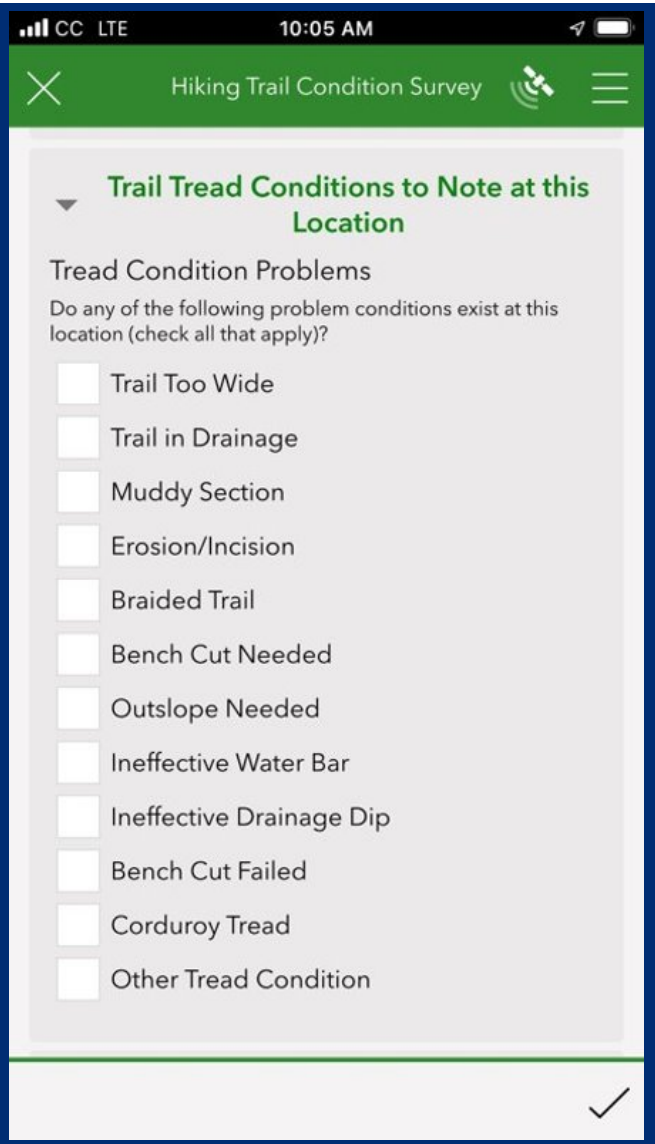
Trail Condition Draft Field Form

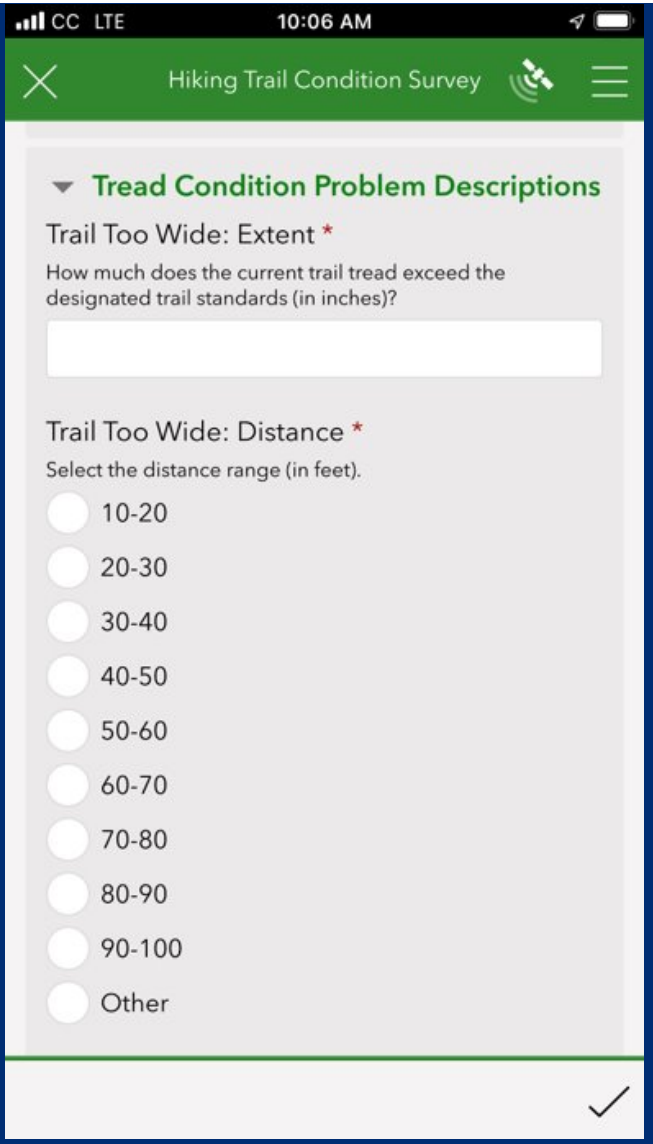
- Monitoring is kind of step 2 - we need a baseline first
- Developed Draft Trail Condition Survey Form (Survey123)
- Collect a GPS point at a location along a trail with problem/issue/concerns
- Standards and desired conditions still in the works
- Intend to integrate VUM and other classification schema: spot locations, trail segments, and entire trails



Where is there a **problem, concern, issue** with the trail?

GPS point collected.





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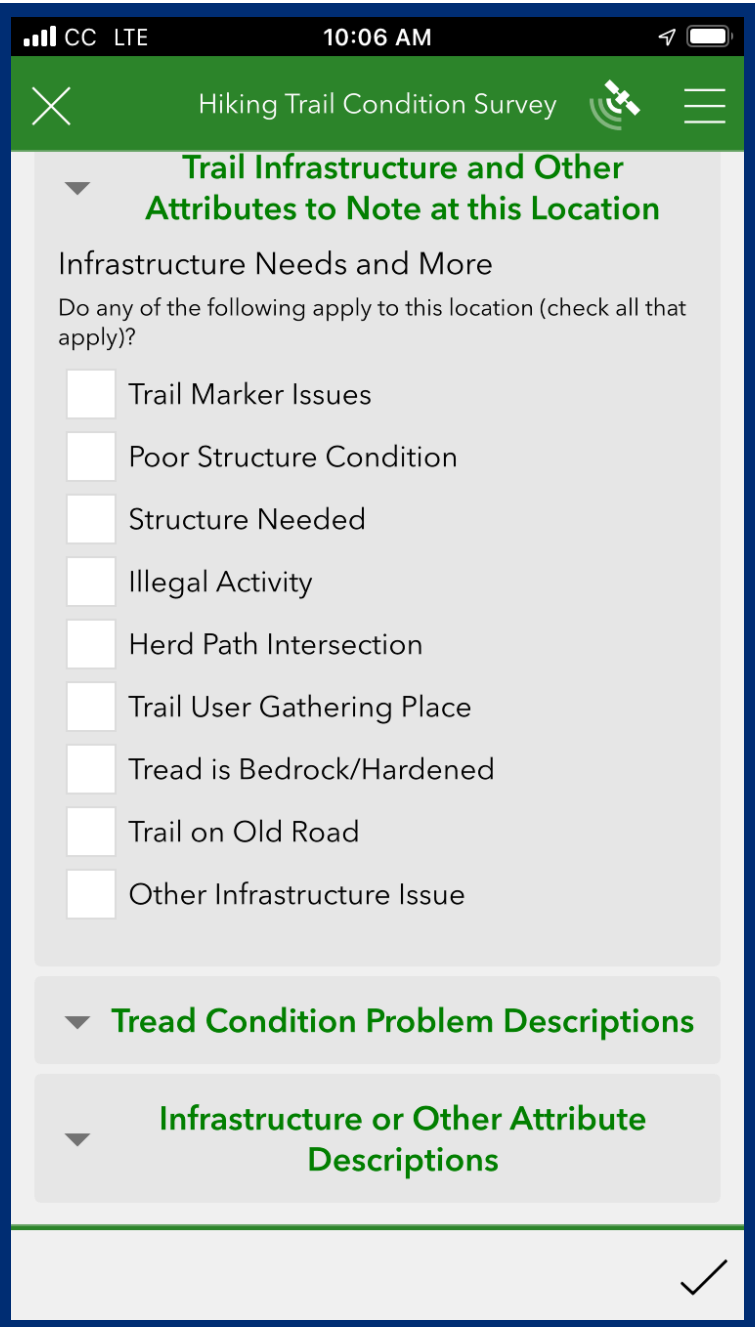

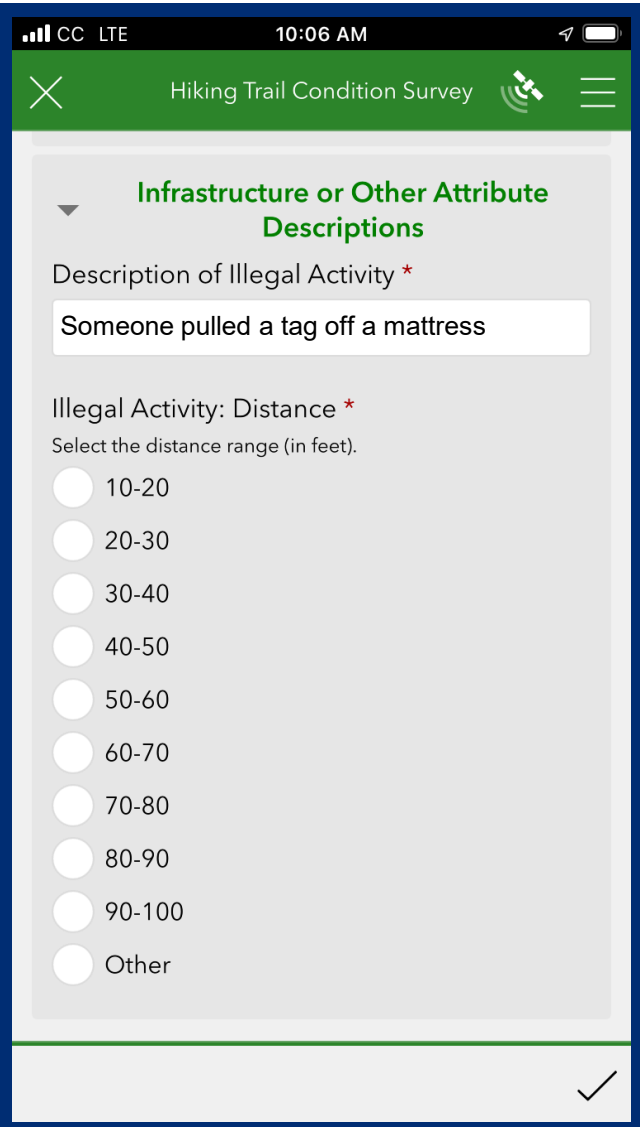

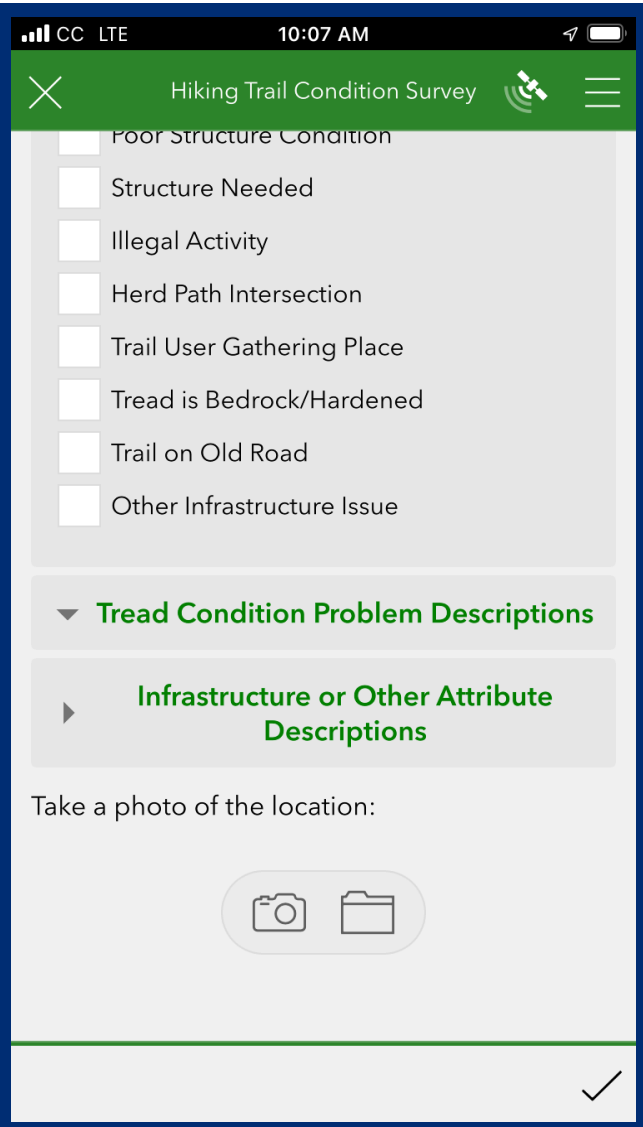

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Questions....So Far?