

McLennan Reservation Management Plan 2009



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McLennan Reservation Management Plan

Location: Tyringham, MA

Acreage: 491 acres

Completed by: Vincent Antil, Julie Richburg, Will Garrison, Sean Cowhig.

Date: 8/27/2009

Supporting Reports and Materials:

Trustees Property Guide

Property Profile, 1978 (J.G. Parsons, S. Piatczyc)

NHESP Biomap and Living Waters data

NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species GIS data.

I. Introduction

a. Brief description of property:

McLennan Reservations is almost 500 acres of forest and wetlands in southeastern Tyringham. The property is accessed by Fenn Road, a steep, unpaved road. The McLennan Reservation covers rugged terrain, including the summit of Round Mountain at 1,580 feet and Long Mountain at 1,950 feet. Situated in the saddle between these peaks is Hale Meadow. This is a former beaver impoundment (Hale Pond) which is now reverting into an open wetland. A portion of the reservation lies at the base of these uplands in the Tyringham Valley. There are open fields in this section, through which flows Hop Brook.

McLennan Reservation is part of a larger (over 5,000 acres) undeveloped, mountainous region along the Tyringham-Otis border. The reservation's size, varied terrain and relative seclusion make McLennan one of The Trustees' more wilderness-like properties. These factors are also important in defining the Reservations ecological significance.

The Reservation was once part of a family estate which included Ashintully, a Trustees' property located across Sodom Road. This history, and the proximity of these two properties should be kept in mind during any future Ashintully property planning process.

b. Acquisition history:

McLennan Reservation was acquired as gifts from John S. McLennan in 1977 and 1978.

c. Donor's wishes or other clear guiding principles: None known.

II. Summary of Preliminary Management Goals
McLennan should be managed as a “C-level” property.
C-type management properties are characterized by low visitation, and modest resource significance and management complexity. Typically, these properties are an important local resource, but will not likely engage a broad range of visitors and volunteers.

III. Legal and Management Considerations: none

IV. Property Description:

A. Historic and Cultural Resources

Significant Historic Features:

- The grave site of Robb de Peyster Tytus and Grace Henop Tytus is located near the summit of Round Mtn. Tytus had pieced together the estate that is now the McLennan reservation, and built the “Marble Palace” at Ashintully. It was Grace’s son by her second marriage, John McLennan, who gave the property to The Trustees. The grave monument is a flat stone set in the ground framed by smaller rough stone.
- There are a couple old cellar holes on the property at the site of a 19th century farmstead. Little is known about this site or if it has any significance. The cellar holes are not maintained.

Threats to Historic Resources:

- The Tytus grave stone has settled into the ground, but is still intact. The site, which is not easily found, has not had any problems with vandalism or abuse. Vegetation may degrade the monument over time.

Opportunities:

- The Trustees does some trimming and pulling of vegetation around the Tytus grave once a year. Research into the acquisition documents does not show any legal or other stated responsibility to maintain the site, but it is a light task that can be combined with regular property visits. The property manager feels The Trustees should continue this light maintenance.
- Little is known about the history of the reservation, prior to the Tytuses. Additional research is needed related earlier land use history and cultural resources.

B. Natural Resources

Significant Natural Features:

- State-listed species: Wood turtle (SC) (found in 2008)
- Priority natural community type: Rich mesic forest (S3).
- BioMap Core Habitat and BioMap Supporting Natural Land.
- Potential vernal pool.
- Provides habitat for wide-ranging mammals including moose, black bear, coyote, and fisher.
- Wetlands: pond and streams – habitat for potential rare species
- Relatively intact, invasive-free interior forest (an increasingly rare landscape in Massachusetts).

Threats to Natural Features:

- Invasive species. Invasive species occur near old roads, foundations, and existing roads. Much of the interior forest does not have invasive species populations established. Trails and other disturbances could serve as corridors for invasive species spread. Invasives currently known from the property include: garlic mustard, oriental bittersweet, glossy buckthorn, bush honeysuckle, Japanese barberry
- Hemlock woolly adelgid. Although not currently known from the property, there are patches of hemlock which, if killed by the HWA, could change habitats on the reservation currently dominated by hemlock.
- Global climate change has the potential to significantly alter the ecosystems and natural resources of Massachusetts including changes to the flora and fauna, especially invasive species.
- Development of nearby parcels. Adjacent parcels are currently not developed. Development could impact habitat quality and continuity. Development could also serve as an additional vector for non-native invasive species.
- Timber trespass. The boundaries are poorly marked. Timber trespass could result in change of habitats and/or introduction of invasive species.

Opportunities:

- Additional ecological assessments necessary to identify potential rare species, especially those within priority habitats, along streams or seeps, and within the wetland. Much of the property has not been carefully assessed for rare species.
- Implementing a program of early detection and rapid response to new exotic invasive species will reduce the potential of these species becoming established, especially if hemlocks decline due to the hemlock woolly adelgid. In addition, eradication of localized populations of invasive species (such as garlic mustard along Fenn Road) would prevent these species from gaining a foothold within the forest interior. Garlic mustard may be spreading along our trail and should be controlled to prevent further spread.
- Strengthen the natural landscape's resilience to climate-related changes by reducing existing environmental stressors. Specific management techniques to

achieve this include invasive species control (see above), reducing negative recreational impacts, and restoration and protection of uncommon and declining habitats (such as rich mesic forest).

B. Scenic Resources

Significant Scenic Features:

- Hale Meadow, the former Hale Pond, provides an extensive viewshed between Round and Long Mountains. It also gives visitors an example of the natural succession of a beaver pond.
- The fields along Sodom Road and Hop Brook provide an extensive view of McLennan’s forest mountainsides from the pastoral open land below.
- The trail along the western boundary and Camp Brook provides woodland scenery with a stream and stone walls.
- There are no view points from forested summits of Round Mountain or Long Mountain.

Threats: None

Opportunities: None

C. Structural Resources:

Structure	Size	Current Use	Current Condition
Parking on the side of Fenn Road (dirt)	5	Parking	Good. Space is adequate.
Log bridge across Hop Brook.	20' X 8'	Tractor access to fields north of brook	Very rude structure. No foundation, just laid across brook. Stable.
Tytus grave	7' X 8'	Burial site	Fair but stable. Continue to remove any nuisance vegetation.

Threats to Structural Resources:
see Historic Resources section for description of Tutus grave site.

Opportunities: None

D. Visitor Services and Engagement:

Visitor Engagement:

McLennan is not a heavily visited property. Pull off parking at the end of Fenn Road is adequate for current use. During the winter, the town does not usually plow Fenn Road past Camp Brook. While there is an entrance sign and regulations sign, there is currently no bulletin board kiosk.

- McLennan Reservation is the site of one interpretive program a year.
- Hunting is allowed, in season.

Current Volunteer Engagement:

- McLennan Reservation usually hosts one volunteer work day per year.
- There is also a volunteer steward. Until now, this volunteer has concentrated on pulling garlic mustard around the Fenn Road entrance.

Threats:

- The main trail east from the parking area follows an extension of Fenn Road. There are problems with erosion on the lower section of this trail.

Opportunities:

- Install a bulletin board kiosk at the Fenn Road entrance.
- Develop a plan for addressing the erosion problem on Fenn Road section of main trail: What is scope of problem? How far does town road and responsibility extend?
- Increase volunteer presence on property to include trail monitoring, as well as invasive species control.
- Connection with Ashintully.

Service:	Does it Exist?	Specific Description: age, condition, actively updated?
1. Approach signs that lead visitors to the property	N	
2. Entrance and trailhead signs.	Y	
3. Kiosk or Bulletin Board meets standards.	N	
4. Up-to-date Map on bulletin board and website.	N	
5. Trails are clearly marked	Y	
6. Adequate parking area.	Y	Pull off parking is in good condition and adequate for this level of property.
7. Interpretive Program.	Y	Program held about yearly.

I. Current Resources Available for Management

a. Staff and Volunteers

The Stockbridge Management Unit covers 11 properties and over 2,500 acres. There are 6 full-time staff (including the Bartholomew's Cobble ranger and a horticulturalist) There are also 2 seasonal maintenance positions.

Management HQ is in Stockbridge, 8 miles away.

Approximately 2% of the unit's staff time is allocated to McLennan.

Currently, there is a volunteer steward for the property, but her activities have been mostly invasive control. Expansion of volunteer presence is desired.

b. Equipment

The Stockbridge Unit has: 3 pickup trucks, 1 dump truck, 1 tractor w/ bucket-loader. The unit has no chipper.

c. Operating budget

Full FY10 operating budget for the Stockbridge unit \$ 259,000 (includes staff).

McLennan has no separately budgeted expenses.

McLennan does have an endowment. Interest income from endowment is available use across the management unit.

d. Other (partners, etc.)

II. Recommended One-time Actions

Rec#	Type	Resource Protection Action	Description/ Rationale	Phase	Rank	1' staff	2' staff	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Total	Vol.	Total Phase 1	Total Phase 2	Total Phase 3	Total Plan Costs all Phases	Budget Source	Operat ing	Supple mental	Capital	Targett ed Fundin g Source	Notes	Status
								Staff	Staff	Staff	Plan	Op?	Costs	Costs	Costs								
								hours	hours	hours	Staff												
											Needs												
1	GM	Develop a plan to correct eroding sections trail (Fenn Rd. extension)	Main Trail follows extension of Fenn Road, which has serious erosion problems.	1	C	S		20	0	0	20		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	O					This step requires clarifying Town responsibility for Fenn Rd. extension. Hours list are only for research.	NS
2	GM	New bulletin board / Kiosk needed.	Currently no bulletin board kiosk on site.	1	C	S		40			40		\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$1,500	O					E&O will provide graphics. Trail map is already complete. Kiosk must be built.	NS
3	GM	Increase volunteer's activities on property.	Volunteer stewardship currently consists of just Invasives control.	1	D	S		12			12		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0						Contact current steward about increasing responsibilities or recruit additional volunteer.	NS
4	NR	Invasive species control.	Garlic mustard control near parking area and along trail. Other locations may be identified following Botanical Survey.	1	N	EC		36			36		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	O					Initial control of problem areas. Periodic monitoring and control will become a routine item.	IP
5	NR	Botanical Survey of reservation.	Property has not been assessed for rare species. Also include locating invasive species.	2	N	EC			36		36		\$4,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,000	O						NS
6	NR	Additional natural resource survey: Invertebrates, Amphibians	Property has not been assessed for rare species. Also include locating invasive species.	2	N	EC			36		36		\$2,500	\$0	\$0	\$2,500	O						NS
7	NR	Additional natural resource survey: Breeding bird survey	Volunteer or in-house.	2	N	EC			64		64		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	O						NS
8	HR	Additional research into land use history and cultural resources		3	D	HR				24	24		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	O						NS
9	GM	Approach signs		3	N	S				8	8				\$200	\$200	O						NS
TOTAL								108	136	32	276		\$8,000	\$0	\$200	\$8,200							

Key to Recommended One-Time Actions:

Type: GM – General Management, NR – Natural Resource Management, VM - Visitor Management
 Phase: 1 – 2009 through 2011, 2 – 2012 through 2014, 3 – 2015 through 2017
 Rank: C – Critical, N – Needed, D - Desired
 Staff: DSR – Director of Structural Resources, EC – Ecologist, LC – Land Conservation, E&O – Ed. & Outreach Publications, HR – Historic Resources, S - Superintendent
 Budget Source: N – Not Applicable, O – Operating Status: IP – In Progress, NS – Not Started

Routine Management Program

Line #	Task	Action Type	Acceptable Performance Level(APL)	Acceptable Frequency	Less than annual	Season	Who?	Volunteer Opp?	Total hours needed to reach APL	Add'l funds needed to reach APL	Notes
1	Property Visit	GM	Adequate	Once a month	no	W, S, Su, F	S	yes	24	\$100	Inspect signs, re-stock kiosk, pick-up trash, check trail conditions. Remove nuisance vegetation from Tytus grave site.
2	Invasive Monitoring	NR	Strong	3 times a year	no	S, Su, F	EC	yes	4	\$0	Monitoring and follow up of invasive species.
3	Mow fields in lower section of property	NR	Adequate	Annually	no	F,W	S	no	3	\$0	
4	Inspect boundaries.	NR	Adequate	Every 5 years	yes	W, S	S	yes	16	\$0	May not possible due to staffing. Trained volunteers may be necessary.
								L	47	\$100	

Key to Routine Management Program:

Action Type: GM – General Property Management, NR – Natural Resources Management
 Performance Level: Adequate - The task is currently completed at a level that does not hinder resource protection or the visitor experience.
 Strong - The task is completed in a manner/at a frequency that represents the ideal.

III. Conclusions

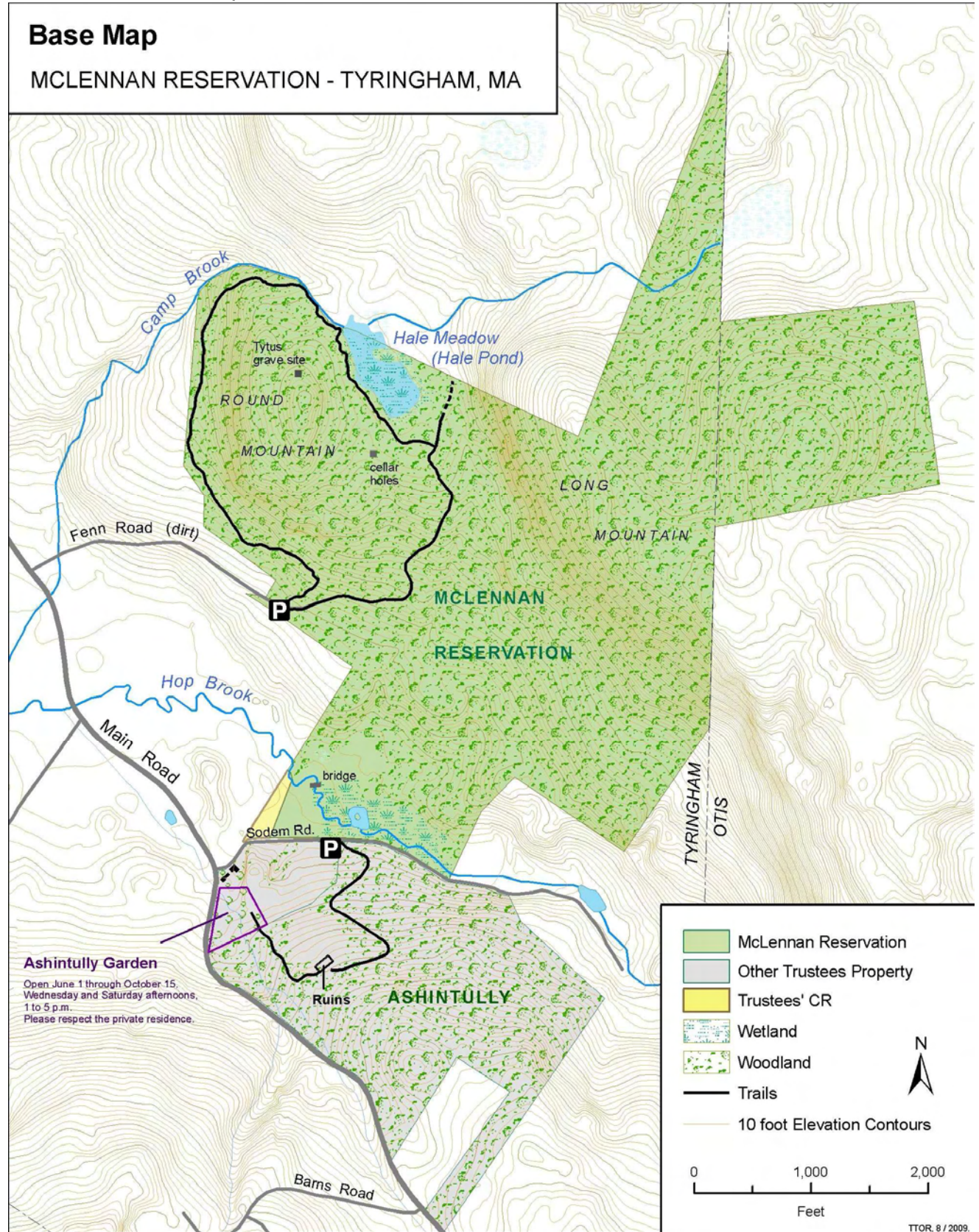
McLennan Reservation is a large and largely undeveloped property. Its size, terrain and varied landscape provide both an important ecological resource and a place where visitors can experience solitude. McLennan is expected to remain a C-level property in terms of visitor use and management complexity, although its proximity to Ashintully may present modest opportunities for increased visitor use in the future.

Current staff and resources are adequate to meet these needs; additional volunteer support will be needed to carry out a portion of this plan.

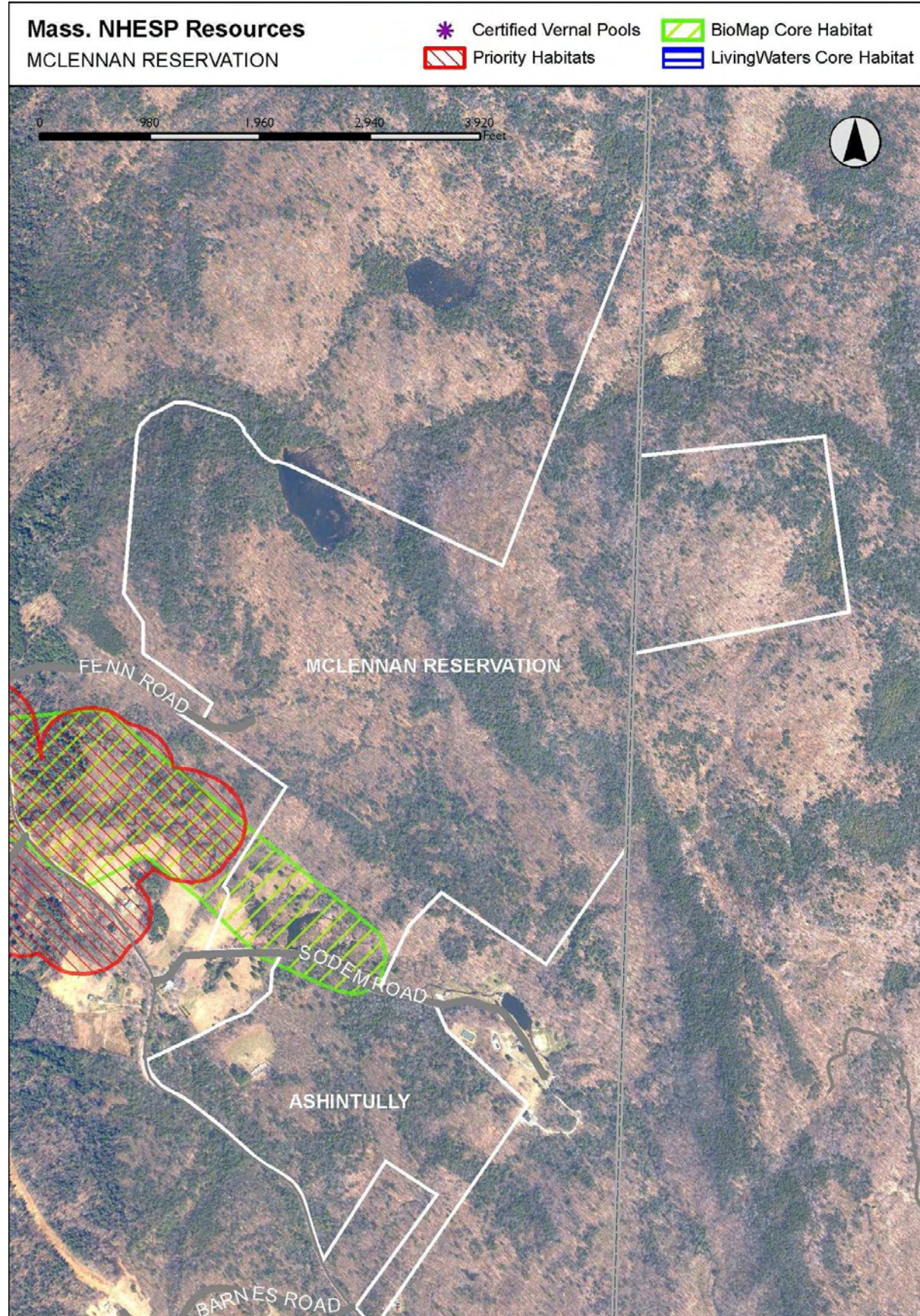
IV. Monitoring and Review

Property plan should be reviewed annually by staff to ensure progress is being made to complete the recommendations. Based on the investigations recommended in this plan, a full, comprehensive plan may be needed for McLennan Reservation in the future.

APPENDIX A. Base Map



APPENDIX B: Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Resources Map



APPENDIX C: Open Space Context Map

