

# The Rabbit Track Town Forest

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## Location and Access

The Rabbit Track is in the northeastern part of town, off Ferris drive and the Rabbit Track Trail. Ferris Drive turns into a class 4 road or town trail. This trail can be used to drive to the town forest, but once the trail passes the corner marker for the forest it become impassible due to the trail being washed out. About 200-300 yards from the wash out the trail enters the northern part of the Town Forest. This is where the old landing site and intersection of two other trails are located. One of the trails is the Rabbit Track trail which eventually ties into Chelsea Mountain Road. From the landing location the Rabbit Track Trail crosses Half-way Brook at a historic bridge. This bridge is unlikely to hold any vehicle traffic. One of the abutments is starting to collapse. It can still be used to for walking, for now.



Figure 1 Historic Bridge



Figure 2 Abutment starting to collapse

## Resources

Halfway Brook runs through the northern part of the property and along the western boundary line. There is beautiful water fall near the corner pin in the north. David Paganelli said it is one the nicest water falls in Orange Co. The banks of Halfway brook south of the water fall are steep. It is a very impressive water feature.



Resources





**(continued)**

There is a well-established trail system on the property. These trails appeared to be in good condition. The only limiting factor of the trail system is the historic bridge. These trails don't connect with each other and continue off the property once they reach the boundary line



Figure 3 Trail



Figure 4 Forest

Generally, the forest of the Rabbit track is made up hemlock and mixed hardwoods. The forest is in good health. A more thorough inventory could be done to better asses the forest.

**Management issues**

The terrain of the Rabbit Track is steep. Especially in the eastern and southern parts of the property. It makes this part of the property inoperable to any timber operations.

With the road being wash out the access to the Rabbit Track is not ideal. With a little work the access can improved and fixed so that cars can drive into the parcel. Once in the landing location there is room to park 3-5 cars.

There is a large old dump on the property this dump does not appear to be active. It is quite large and located on the bank of the Halfway Brook just above the waterfall.



Figure 5 Dump



Figure 5 Junk

Goutweed was noticed near the old landing site. There were no other invasives noticed during the site visit



Figure 6 Goutweed

### **Recommendations**

I believe the Rabbit track could accommodate recreationalist looking for a remote experience. This could be hikers, cross county skiers, snowshoers, and mountain bikers among others. The biggest limitation is the access road being washed out. With a few improvements to Farris drive this town forest would be accessible by cars and trucks. There is a place to park and turn around once Farris Drive enters the property.

There is a timber resource on the property. This resource will be hard to get at without improvements to Farris drive and the bridge. There may be another option to cross this stream beside the bridge, possibly a ford. The timber resource is not likely to attract a large logging operation. I do not believe there is enough valuable timber here for that. It is likely this forest could accommodate a logger interested in cutting firewood. There are a few local loggers that may be interested in removing the firewood in this forest through a timber stand improvement treatment. Logging operation would alter the look and feel of the forest and might not make it as appealing for recreationist, but it could a be a way to get the road fixed up.

The old dump should be removed. It will take a lot of work to get his junk out of steam and off the bank. This is special area and the dump really take a way from this look and feel of the stream, not to mention the leaching of whatever was dumped here into the stream.