

Issues

Wetlands
Wildlife Habitat
Old Growth Forest
Species of Concern
Erosion
Trail Grade
Access/Parking
Maintenance

Interpretive Themes

Old Growth Forest
Vegetation Diversity
Wildflowers
Cultural History of the Black Hills
Native American History
Wildlife of the Area
Black Hills Geology
Recreational Climbing
Birds/Canyon Wrens

Notable Features

Panoramic Vistas
Old Baldy Mountain
Wetlands
Walled Canyon
Granite Formations

The expected completion for the Environmental Assessment (EA) is spring 2009



Overview Yellow Wolf Loop Trail

Description

A backcountry hiking loop system around Mount Rushmore with scenic vistas, spur trails and interpretive stops along the route.

Length: Approximately 7-10 miles (3 miles currently exist).
Width: Approx. 24" tread with brush cleared 6-8 feet. Wider in areas of higher use.

Features: Use of native materials. Log checks, rock checks and water bars will be required on parts of the trail.

Proposed for foot traffic and backcountry standards that would link with other existing trails (Centennial, possible Mickelson extension).

This project is part of the National Park Service (NPS) Centennial Initiative celebrating 100 years of parks in 2016, calling for creation of a trail system that would provide visitor's access to areas of significant natural and cultural resources.



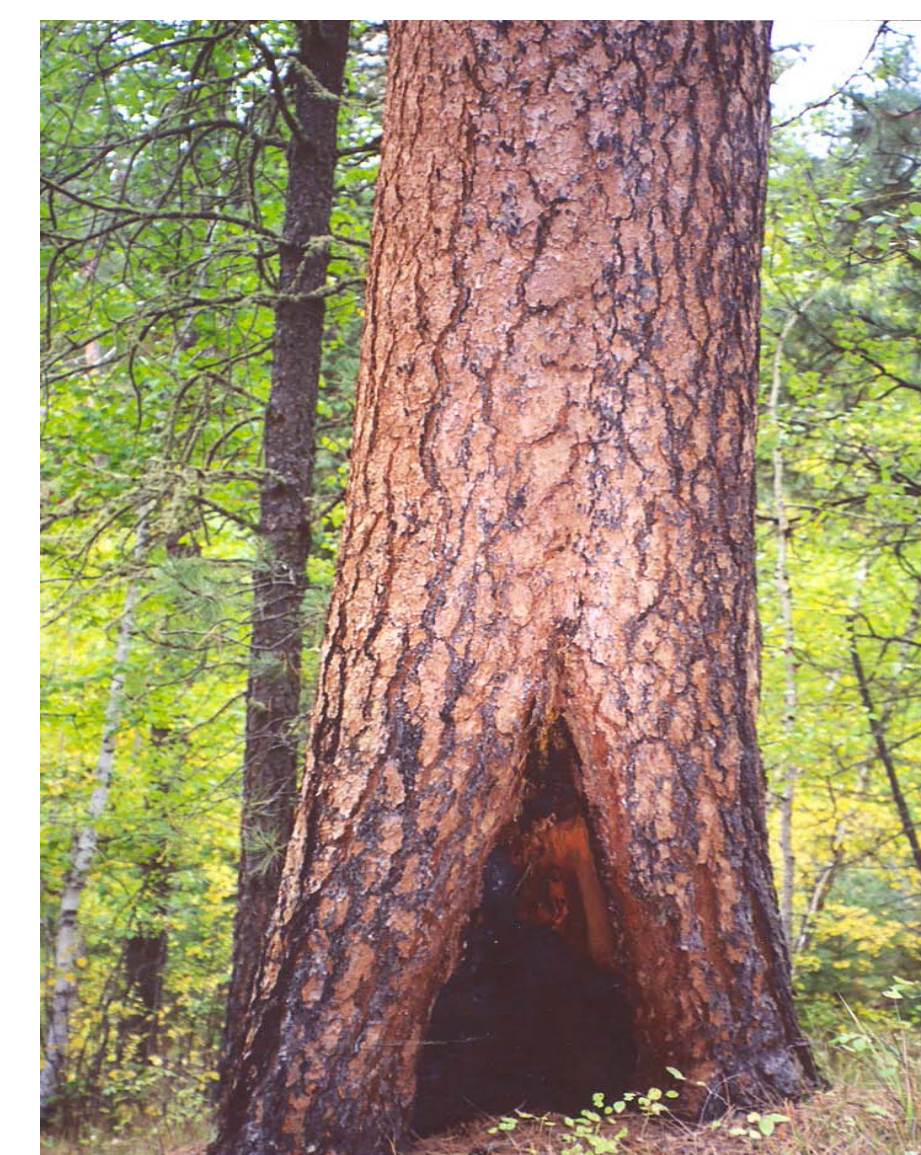
Starling Basin



Mount Baldy



Tipi Village near Presidential Trail



Old Growth Forest

Trailhead Amenities

Parking
Vaulted Toilet
Trail Sign
Bike Rack
Day Use (selected sites)



(Example of vaulted toilet)



(Example of day use picnic table)



(Example of trail sign)

Photos: Courtesy of NPS and Matrix

Description

Under the no action alternative, the existing trails would remain and the authorized uses and park facilities would continue operation. Ongoing maintenance of the three existing trails with a rehabilitation of the Blackberry Trail would be required.

Environmental Impacts

Existing formal and informal trails cross streams and wetlands causing erosion and ecological and wildlife disturbances. Rehabilitation of the Blackberry Trail would mitigate these impacts.



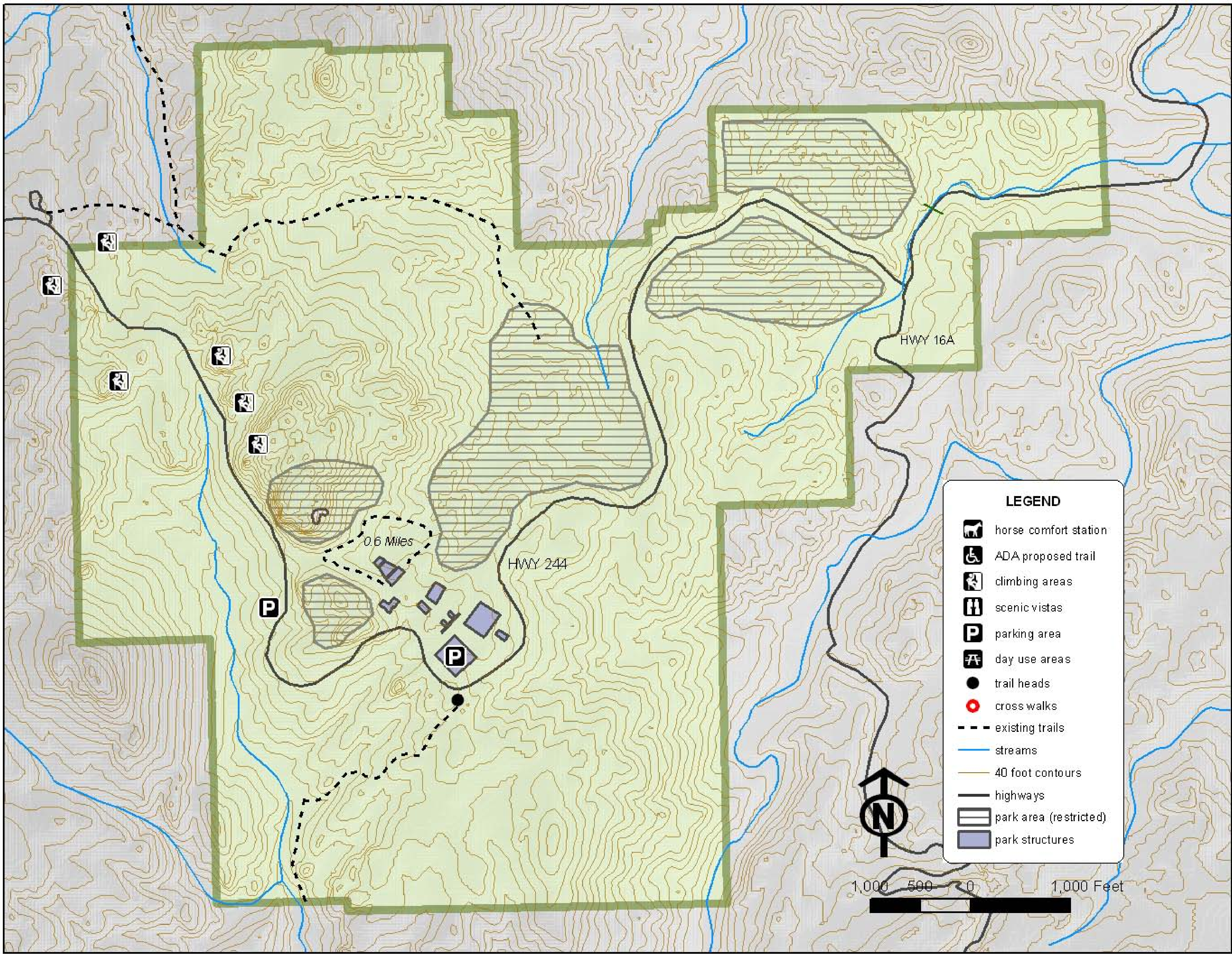
Existing East Boundary Entrance



Existing West Boundary Pull Offs



No Action Alternative



Existing PPI Parking



Existing Profile Parking Area

Photos: Courtesy of NPS and Matrix

Existing Trails

- President's Trail (0.6 mi)
- Blackberry Trail (0.7 mi)
- Trail south of Mount Baldy (0.9 mi)



Presidential Trail



Blackberry Trail



Trail south of Mount Baldy

Description

The single loop trail alternative proposes a trail that would encompass the Memorial property with one large loop (approximately 4.3 miles).

The trails would total 6.7 miles in length. There will be no added parking and the trail must cross Highway 244 in 2 locations.

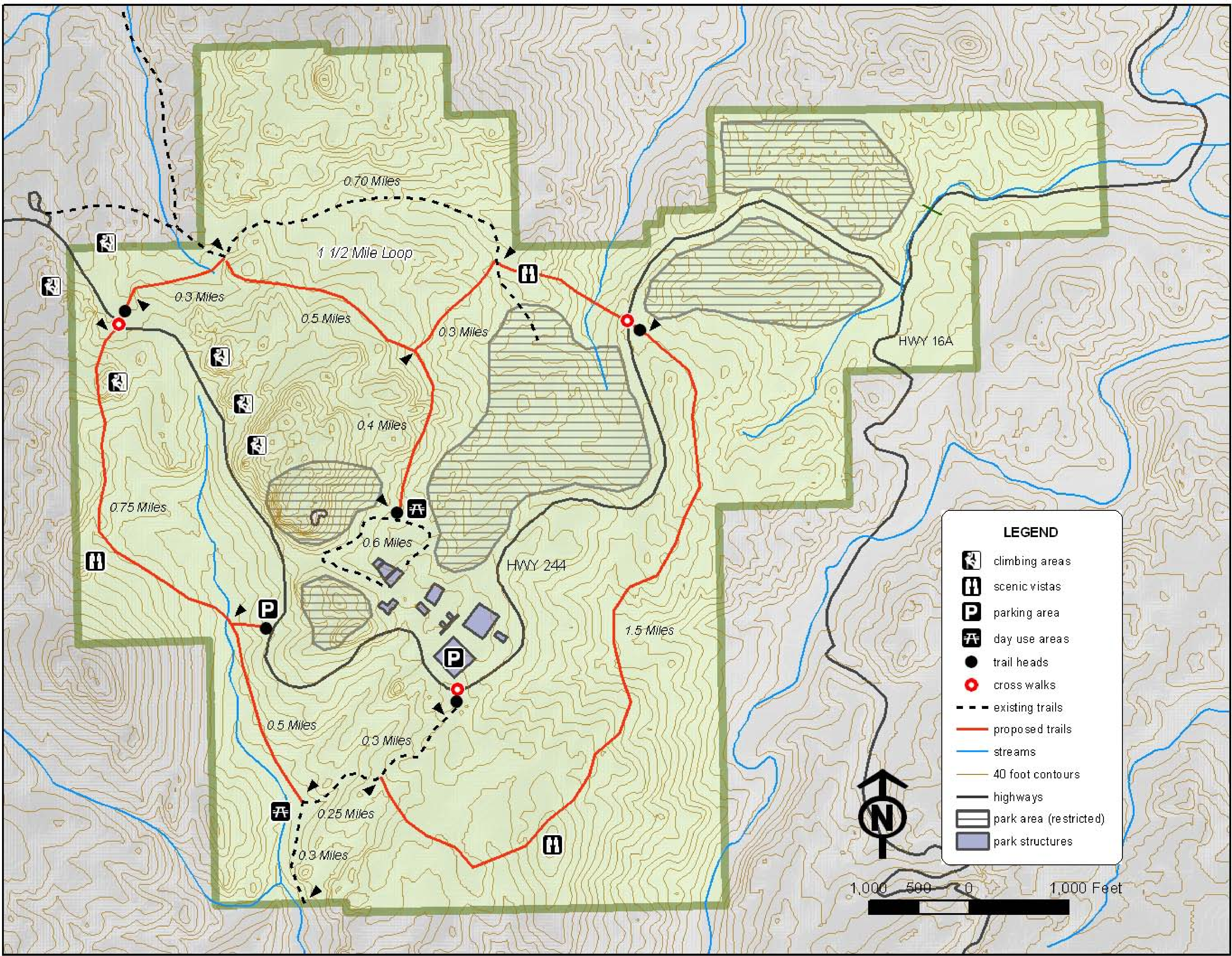
Additions

- 3 Trail Heads
- 3 Scenic Vistas
- 2 Day Use Areas
- 3 Crosswalks
- Switchback

Environmental Impacts

Impacts due to increased use and traffic such as surface water runoff, erosion, and ecological disturbances would increase. These adverse impacts would be mitigated using trail construction features such as elevated walkways, log checks, rock checks and water bars.

Single Loop Trail Alternative



Ecological and Wildlife Resources

There are numerous flowers that bloom throughout the backcountry at Mount Rushmore.

Native Americans used many of these flowers for medicinal and ceremonial purposes.



The backcountry areas of Mount Rushmore (wetlands, old growth forest, rock outcrops) provide a diverse and abundant habitat for many species of mammals, invertebrates, reptiles, amphibian, vegetation, and birds.



(Example of an elevated walkway)



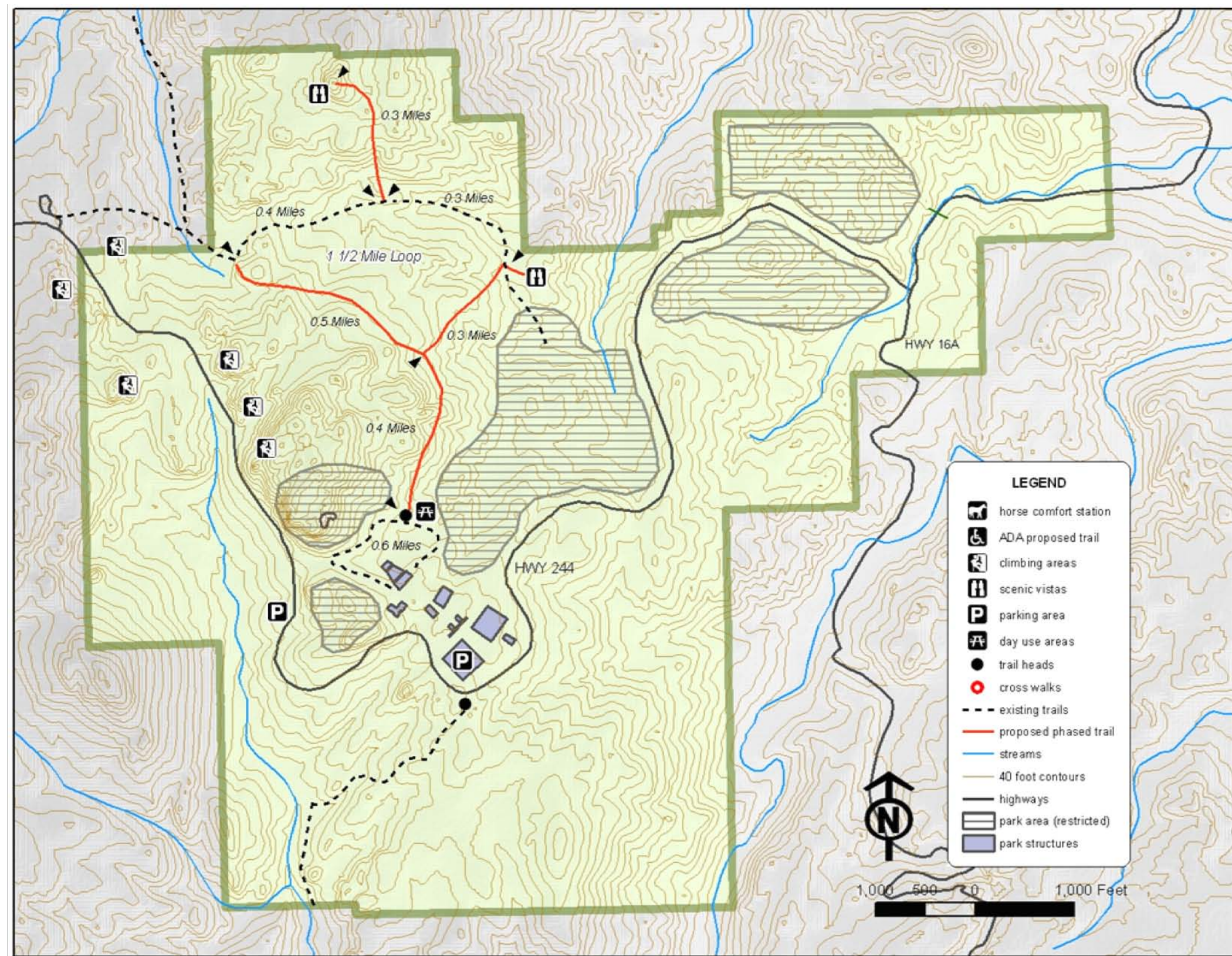
Trail stream



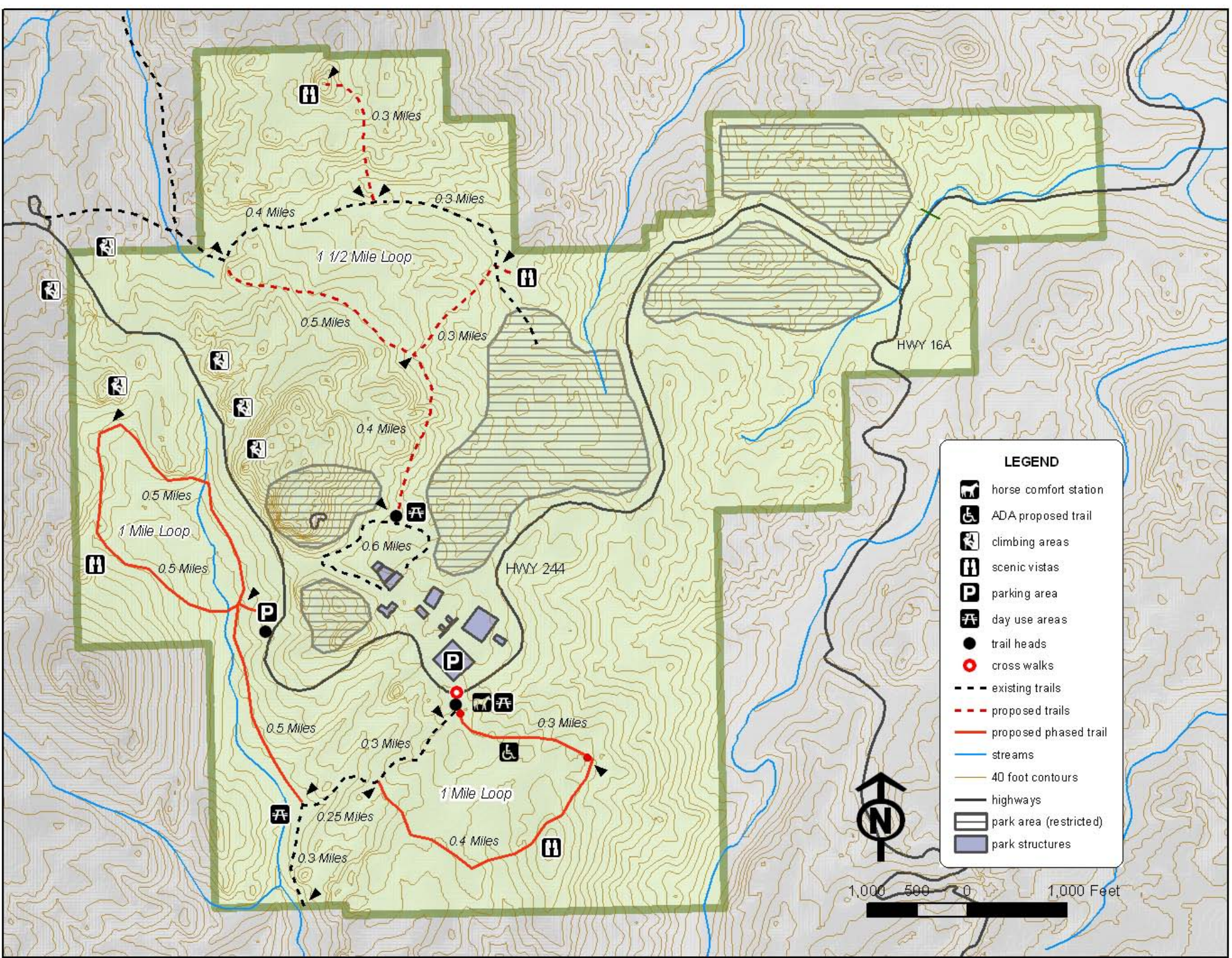
Photos: Courtesy of NPS and Matrix

Multi-Loop Trail Alternative

Phase I – Establish the north trail segments, trailhead and day use at Presidential Trail



Phase II – Establish Starling Basin trail and rehabilitate Blackberry Trail, establish Lot 7 underpass and trailhead, Profile trailhead, and ADA short trail



Description

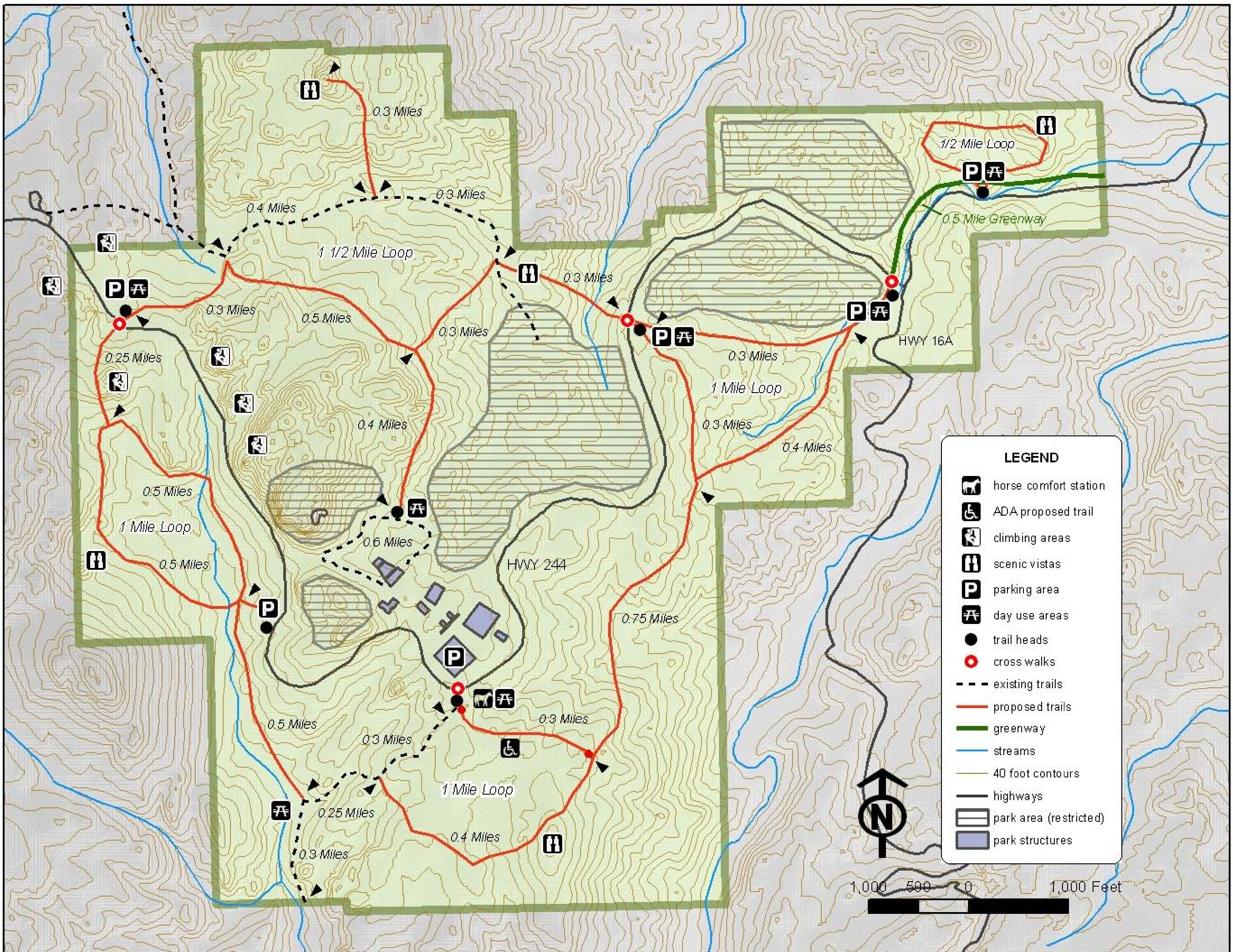
The Multi-Loop Trail retains many of the features of the Single Loop Trail, encompassing the Memorial. Additionally, several shorter sub-loops would be created to allow shorter hikes on the trail and hikes of varying length and difficulty. The main loop, sub-loops, and connecting trails total approximately 9.8 miles in length. This alternative is proposed in 5 phases.

Additions

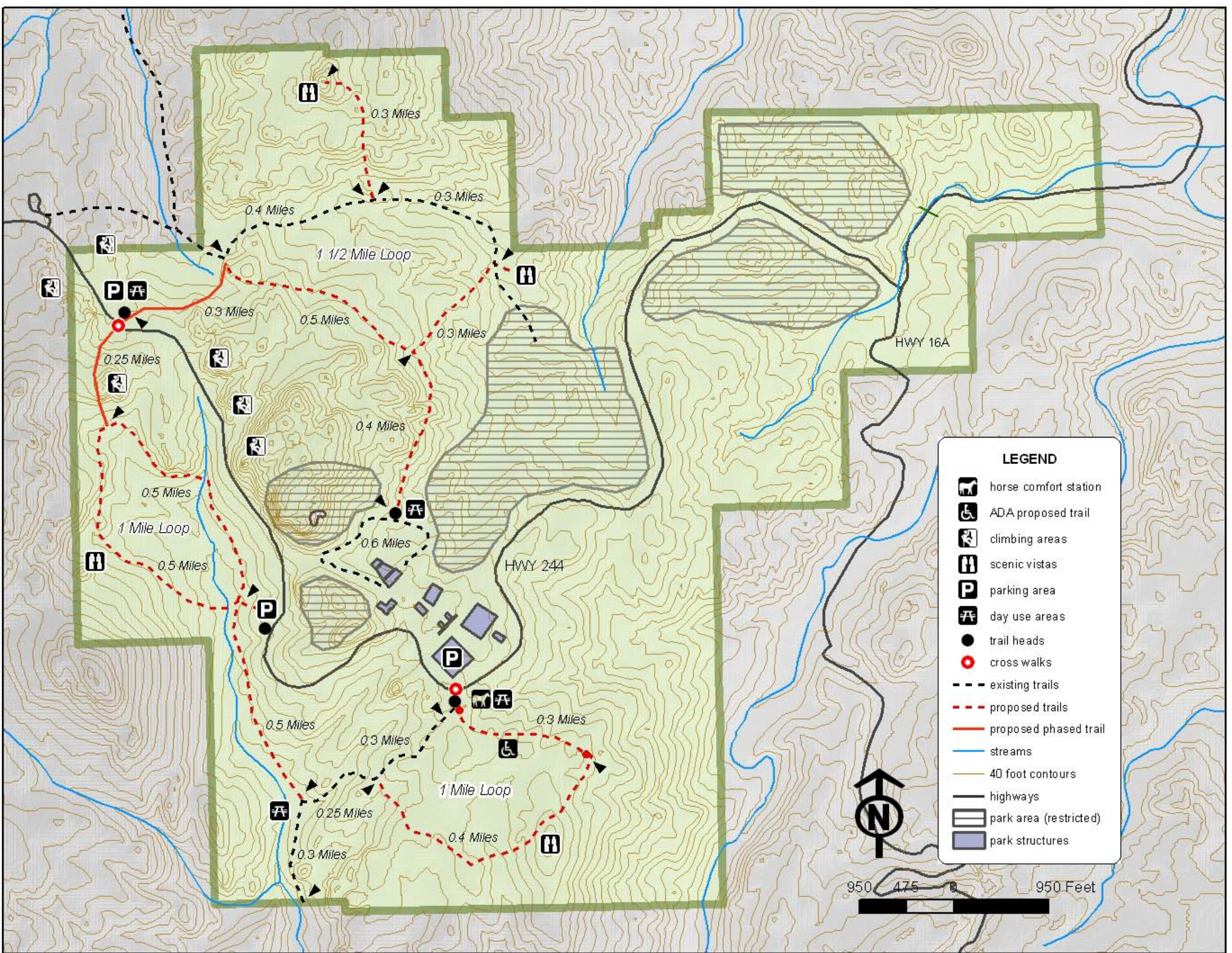
- 5 Trail Heads
- 5 Scenic Vistas
- 8 Day Use Areas
- 4 Parking Areas

- Horse Comfort Station
- 2 Switchbacks
- 4 Emergency Access Points
- Possible Connection to City of Keystone

Phase V – Establish greenway to east boundary, 244/16A crosswalk, east boundary parking, northeast trail and entrance trailhead.



Phase III – Establish west crosswalk, trailhead, parking and connector trails



Phase IV – Establish east crosswalk, trailhead, parking and connector trails, trailhead south of 244/16A intersection

