Welcome to the
Texas Schoolhouse State Forest

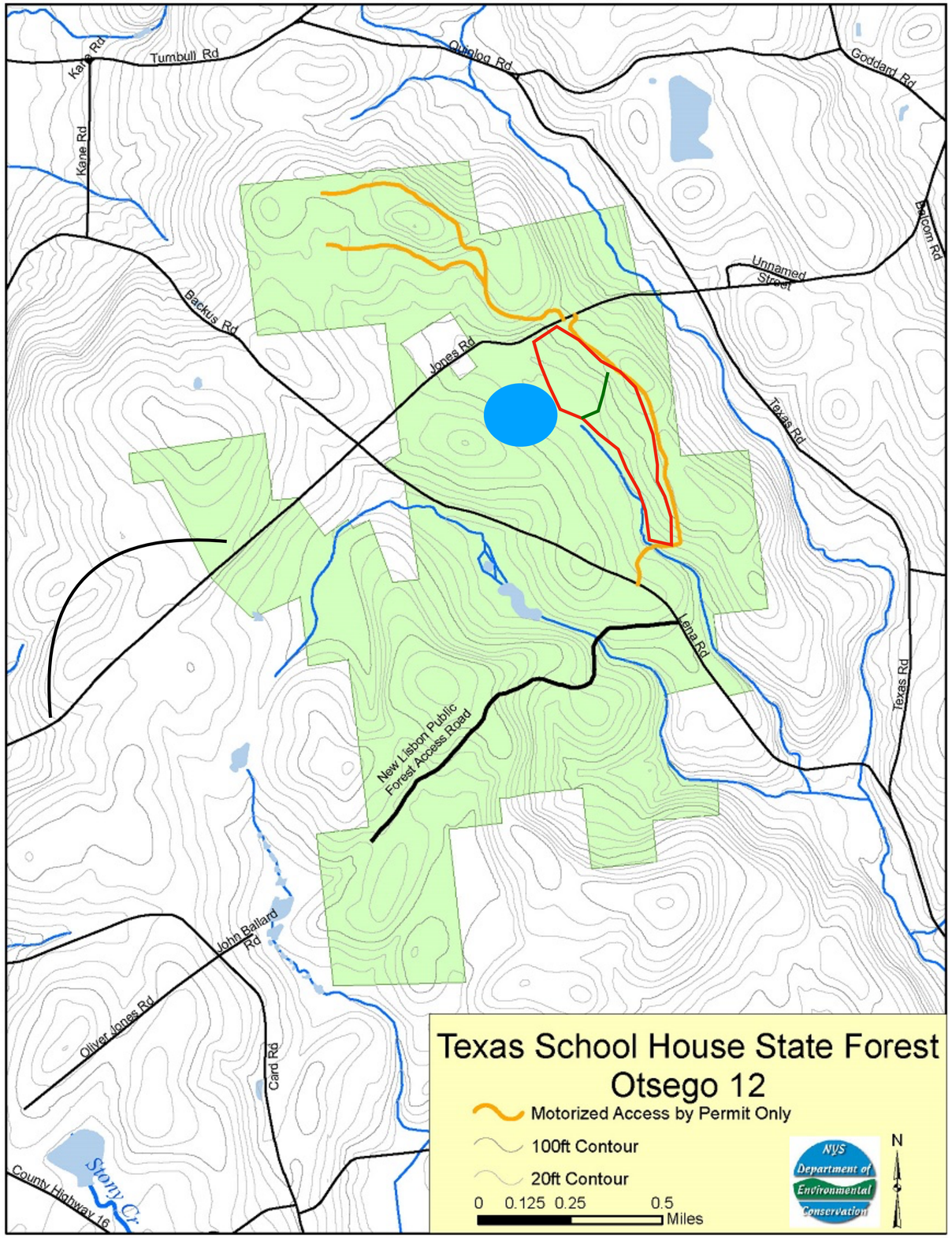
The trails comprise two loops, a longer one of about 3 miles (shown in red) and a shorter one of about 1 mile (cut-off shown in green). The trails are rated as easy to moderate difficulty with little elevation change. The route takes you through a beautiful part of the state forest and is marked with DEC blue and yellow trail markers. There is a large beaver pond (blue dot) where you will see impressive beaver architecture, active nests of great blue herons, rolling hills, old stone walls, and much more. Along the trail are signs explaining some of the plants and animals that you might see along the trails, depending on the season, on having a good eye, and on luck!

There are no designated campsites, however, at-large primitive camping is allowed. Campsites must be at least 150' from the nearest road, trail, or body of water. Camping for more than three nights or in groups of ten or more requires a permit from a Forest Ranger.

Hunting and trapping are allowed during appropriate seasons. The main game species and furbearers in TSSF include deer, turkey, ruffed grouse, rabbits, squirrels, and coyotes.

Three unnamed streams run through TSSF, one of which is known to support a wild trout population of Brook Trout and Brown Trout.

This trail is a joint project sponsored by the NY Dept. of Environmental Conservation and the Town of New Lisbon.



Trees In TSSF

The trees of TSSF are typical of what you'll find in NYS forests. Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and White Pine (*Pinus strobis*) are two of the more common conifers in this area. Hemlocks have small cones and the small flat needles have a pair of white stripes on the underside. White pine have needles in bundles of 5 and large cones. Both are used for timber. Hemlock bark was once used widely in our area to tan leather. Because de-barking killed the trees, many of our largest hemlocks were harvested by the early 1900s. Hemlocks now face a new threat in the invasive Wooly Adelgid insect that takes the sap out of the needles and can kill the tree.

Great Blue Heron

Nicholas Stroh/Audubon Photography Awards

Christopher Grau/Audubon Photography Awards

The Great Blue Heron, often called a “crane,” is the largest heron in North America. It is often seen standing silently along inland rivers or lakeshores, or flying high overhead with slow wingbeats, its head hunched back onto its shoulders. With its variable diet, it can spend the winter farther north than most herons, even in areas where most waters freeze.

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Information provided by Audubon New York, the state program of the National Audubon Society. ny.audubon.org

Forest Management In TSSF

Forests in TSSF are managed by the NYS DEC with the goal of protecting this resource for sustainable use. A well managed woodlot can provide timber and forest products without diminishing the resource for wildlife habitat, recreational use and cleaner air.

The Patch Cut method was developed for areas like ours with an abundance of deer with a fondness for young tree seedlings. When a single or selective cut of a large tree exposes open ground, only a few seedlings can grow and even fewer survive deer herbivory. But in a Patch Cut, many seedlings grow at once, and deer cannot eat them all. The leftover “slash” of branches prevent deer from getting to many of the young seedlings until the trees are large enough to withstand deer impacts on their own.

Good forestry practices help maintain a healthy forest for wildlife, for natural vegetation, and for future generations of hikers and other outdoors folks.

TSSF was logged in 2018 using patch cutting. In 3-5 years after a patch cut, one can find saplings emerging. By 10-20 years after logging, the regrowth should be thick enough to begin selective thinning. Thinning, especially as a Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) cut, provides firewood and leaves coarse woody debris on the forest floor as habitat for mushrooms, insects and ground nesting birds like grouse.

After 30-60 years the trees can be harvested either as a selective cut where only the mature trees are logged, or as another patch cut to regenerate the entire cycle again.