

Request for Proposals: Trail Construction at Ausable Preserve

Ausable Freshwater Center

Jay, NY

Released: December 19, 2025

Responses due: January 9, 2026

Project completion: August 31, 2026

This project is funded by:

Ausable Freshwater Center
Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP)
NEIWPCC
US Environmental Protection Agency

Introduction

Ausable Freshwater Center (AFC) builds a better future for the Adirondacks through effective, science-based stewardship of freshwater systems. We assess and restore damaged streams, replace culverts and dams, monitor the health of Adirondack lakes, ponds, and streams, protect biodiversity, recover critical habitats, and work with communities to build flood resilience and inspire freshwater stewardship.

Overview

AFC is accepting proposals from qualified firms to design and construct a ~3/4 mile sustainable and accessible nature trail in 2026 on a 9+ acre parcel in Jay, NY. The trail is intended to provide users the opportunity to experience a variety of ecological features on the site including terrace meadow, floodplain, wetland, and riverbank.

Project Description

The Ausable Preserve is a 9+ acre plot of land on John Fountain Road in Jay, NY that is owned and managed by AFC, as shown in Image A.

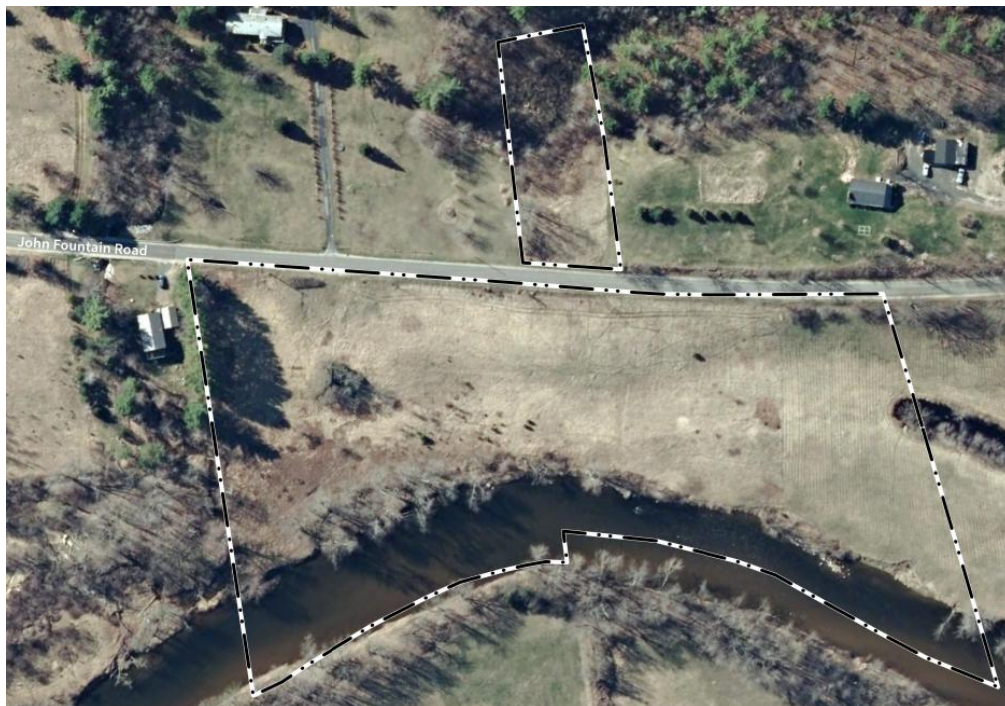


Image A: The Ausable Preserve comprises 9+ acres of land on John Fountain Road in the Town of Jay. The larger parcel will be the site of the nature trail construction project.

In the long term, the larger of the two parcels will be the site of an office and outreach center for AFC. In the short term, we intend to create an accessible nature trail that will (1) provide safe and reliable access for the public, (2) reduce the stress on native plant and animal communities while visitors explore the various ecosystems on the preserve, and (3), if possible, provide stable safe access for individuals with disabilities, including wheelchair access.

The draft pathway, visible in Image B, moves through a variety of terrain, some relatively steep, along the river and across seasonally wet areas. A successful bidder will be experienced with identifying options for path substrate including paths that are permeable or that can be reestablished seasonally. They must also have knowledge of and experience with the needs of potential disabled users in terms of ideal substrates, slopes, et cetera. In winter, the lower terrace running along the river often accumulates significant pieces of ice up to 2 to 3' thick and several feet across. These can melt in place but might also scour the ground and structures or substrates alongside them.



Image B: Aerial view of the Preserve parcel and the possible path of the nature trail.

Project Details

1) Project Roles

AFC staff will oversee APA, DEC, and Town of Jay permitting for the project, manage relationships with adjacent neighbors, and be present on-site during construction as needed.

Selected contractor will develop a schematic design for written approval by AFC. Once approved, contractor will (a) create a simple plan set that identifies the pathway and its specifics (e.g., slopes, width, substrate) (b) detail construction requirements, materials, costs, labor, machinery, including substrate options and specifics; and (c) will, after AFC approvals, purchase materials, stage, and then implement construction on time, per plans, and within bid costs.

Contractor will discuss all options and recommendations thoroughly with AFC staff to ensure decisions maximize access, minimize costs while ensuring quality, and protect the property and the ecosystems adjacent to the trail.

As part of the trail plan, near trail signage - less than ten (10) single or double post roughly 2' x 2' signs - will be developed by AFC and installed by the contractor as part of the trail construction. AFC will include contractor in decision-making regarding the number and type of signage used in order to maximize efficiency of installation.

Contractor shall, at all times, work to minimize impacts on the property and the Town of Jay road and infrastructure along the property beyond those needed to efficiently and effectively implement path construction.

2) Bid Schedule

Bids accepted: December 19, 2025 – January 9, 2026

Site tour: by appointment

Requests for additional details will be accepted and answered until January 5, 2026.

3) Scope of Work

The bidder shall provide a description and lump sum cost for each of the following tasks:

- A) Trail design and plan set detailing slopes, widths, substrates, and construction methods.
- B) Trail construction including signage installation and all materials, equipment, labor, and management.

4) Project Completion Date

Project shall be completed, inclusive of all site remediation and demobilization, by August 31st, 2026.

5) Submission

Respondents shall submit proposals with the following information and materials:

- i. Respondent name, address, area(s) of expertise, year established, number of employees, and contact information for the individual authorized to contractually obligate the Respondent.
- ii. Brief description of company, including technical capability and any unique qualifications to perform the work requested.
- iii. Qualifications and experience of key professional staff anticipated to work on this project, including copies of relevant licenses and certificates.
- iv. Proposed approach to the project which includes a schedule for each stage of work as well as measures planned to protect the environment surrounding the work areas.
- v. A budget for the tasks noted above in *#3 Scope of Work* along with the respondent's requested compensation for the completion of each task and completion of the project including mobilization, demobilization, and clean up.

6) RFP Response Deadline & Selection Process

Please submit all proposal materials by email to marque@ausablecenter.org.

Ausable Freshwater Center reserves the right to:

- i. Accept or reject any or all submissions.
- ii. Request qualified respondents to consider contracting only for certain elements of the project.
- iii. Waive or modify minor irregularities in the proposals received.
- iv. Negotiate with respondents, within the proposal requirements, to best serve the interests of the project partners.
- v. Amend specifications after their release, with due notice to all respondents to modify their submission to reflect those amendments.
- vi. Consider every offer or response as firm and not revocable for 30 days unless the offer is withdrawn in writing.
- vii. Award a contract for any or all parts of a proposal.

7) Questions & Answers

Questions and requests for additional details should be emailed to marque@ausablecenter.org no later than January 5, 2026. All questions and answers will be uploaded on AFC's *RFP webpage* <https://www.ausableriver.org/about-us/request-proposals> on a weekly basis for all bidders to view.