

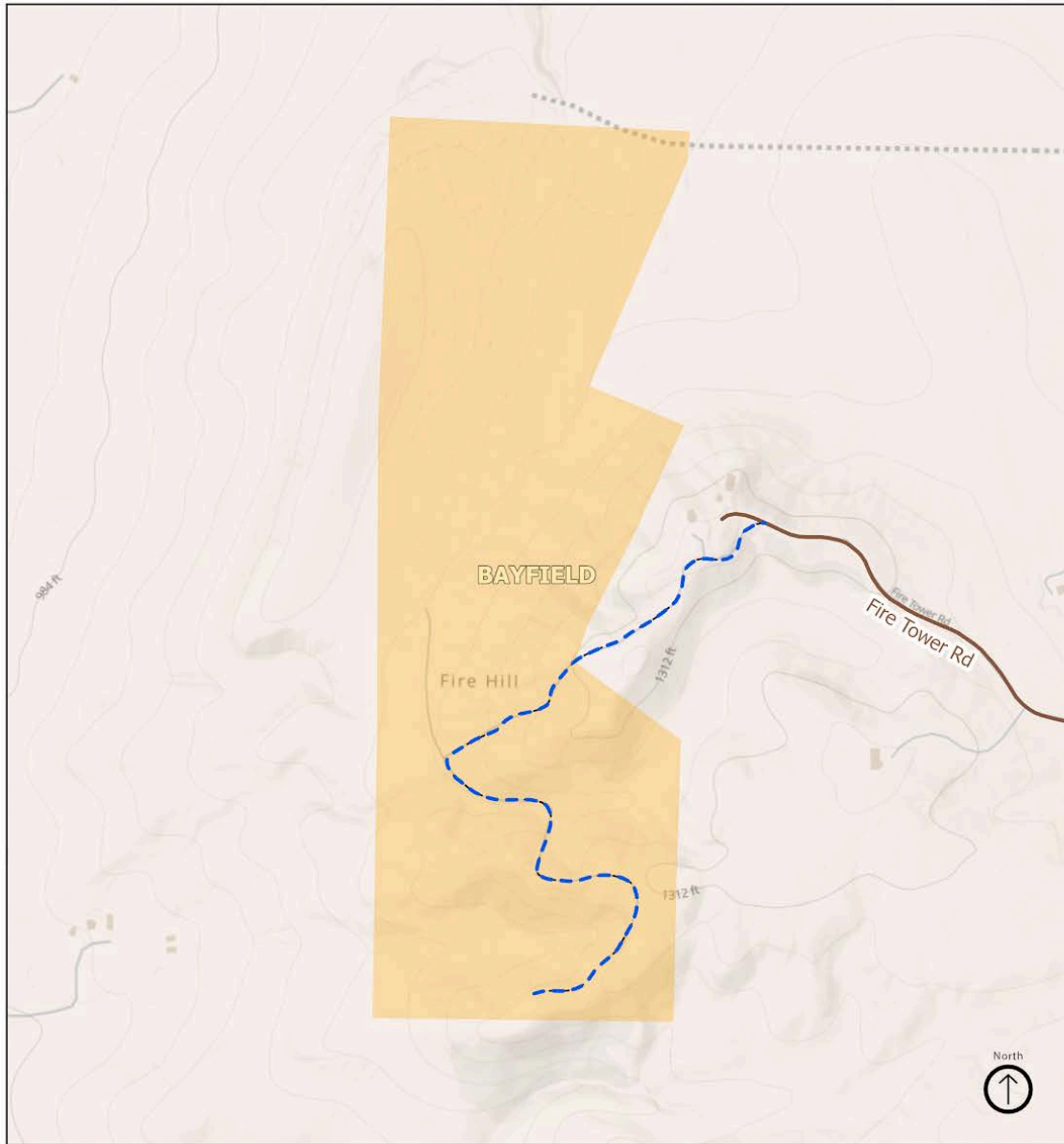
Fire Hill Preserve Trail System Proposal

Trail Concept

The Fire Hill Preserve was acquired by Bayfield County in 2017 and is a 107-acre parcel located at the end of Fire Tower Road in the orchard area north of the City of Bayfield. The preserve is currently open for public use and has a number of informal trails used for hiking throughout the property. The intent of this project is to establish a trail system within the preserve for hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiers, birders, and outdoor enthusiasts.

- **Highlights:** Beautiful, forested trails with rolling hills and steep inclines throughout most of the property.
- **Ecological Habitat:** Northern hardwood forest with birch, sugar maples, and hemlock.

Fire Hill Preserve Trail System	
Lead Entity for Project	Bayfield County
Local Jurisdiction	Town of Bayfield; Bayfield County
Project Length	2 miles
Proposed Trail Uses	Walking, Hiking, Snowshoeing; Cross-country skiing
Proposed USFS Classification	Class 2 - Moderately Developed
Connections to Other Trails	No
Private Land Ownership	No
Category	Category 1 (Implement within 5 years)



94. Fire Hill Preserve Trail System



Trail Concept Detail

In September 2025 Bayfield County hired a landscape architecture firm to help plan and implement trail development within the preserve and help to balance environmental sensitivity with improved public access and low-impact recreational amenities. As such, it is likely that the plan will utilize the series of paved and unpaved access roads that already exist in order to minimize impacts to the site. Likewise, the goal of the project is to create multiple trail loops of varying lengths throughout the property which highlight different features of interest such as forest stands, topography, and viewsapes.

Opportunities & Challenges

Land Ownership

The parcel is owned by Bayfield County and managed as a forest preserve. Access to the property uses a road easement across private properties, thereby necessitating cooperation with those landowners.

Connectivity

While this project does not provide any connection to other trail systems, there is the potential for the future that connections could be made between the Fire Hill Preserve Trail System and the Big Ravine Trail System by connecting to Gracie's Trail (approximately 0.8 miles to the north) and the West Rim Trail Connector Trail (approximately 1 mile to the south), a long-distance loop could be created. Additionally, there is interest from private landowners along Valley Road to create a trail connection between the Fire Hill Preserve and Valley Rd., and possibly to the Sultz Swamp area.

Water Crossings

There is a small wetland in the northwest third of the property, approximately 2 acres in size.

Terrain

The site has rolling hills and steep inclines throughout most of the property. The design of the trail system should incorporate considerations to minimize erosion.

Amenities

In addition to the trail system, a vaulted toilet and small parking lot will be incorporated into the design. This will likely only be maintained for three-season use by Bayfield County with minimal or no plowing in the winter.

Potential Implementation Steps

- Review and finalize plans developed by landscape architecture firm in 2026.

- Coordinate closely with the adjacent landowners in the planning process to facilitate land use compatibility.
 - Seek public input in the planning process.
- Pursue funds for plan implementation.
- Initiate plan implementation in 2027.