



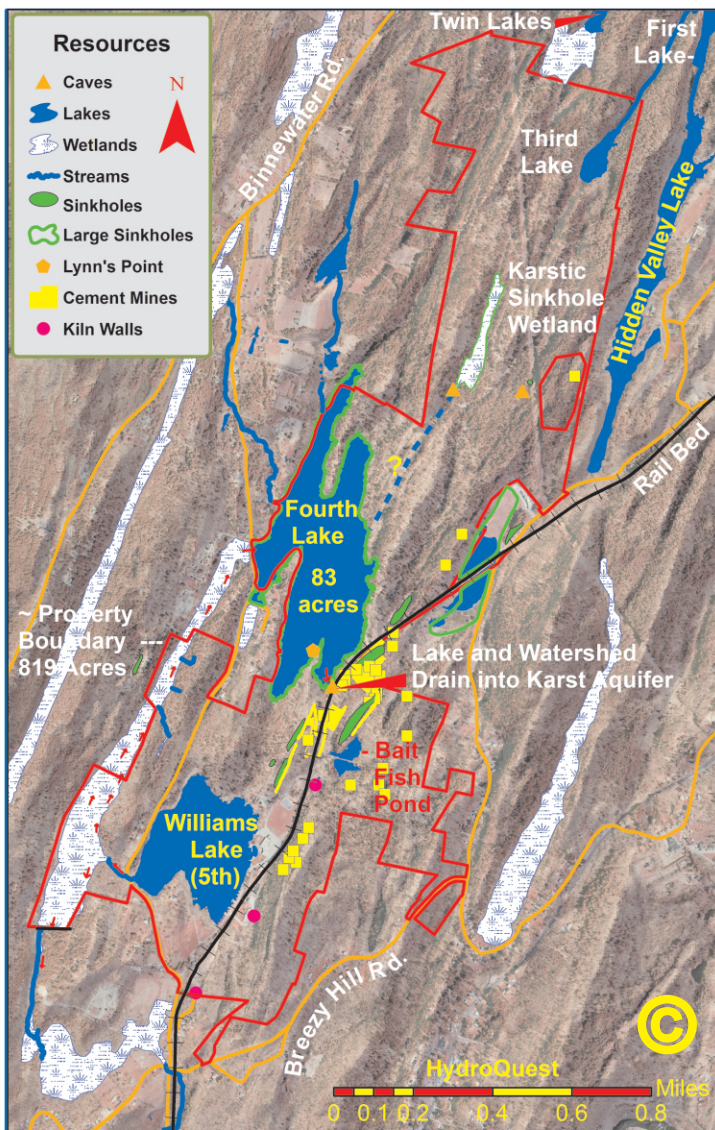
Williams Lake Property: Bountiful Natural & Cultural Resources



Glacially Sculpted Landscape. The 819-acre Williams Lake property lies at the northern terminus of the Shawangunk Mountains. It boasts three of the five Binnewater lakes (Williams Lake: 43 acres; Fourth Lake: 83 acres; Third Lake: 4 acres) and numerous wetlands and ponds teaming with wildlife. The lake basins were sculpted by glaciers eons ago. People are surprised in some years when the level of Fourth Lake drops precipitously, essentially becoming a meadow in a lost lake. Fourth Lake has no surface outlet. A most unique aspect of a portion of the property's surface hydrology is that water from Williams Lake and a number of wetlands flows into Fourth Lake, only to disappear into an underlying karst or cave-bearing aquifer. No one knows where it goes, although it may pass through historic cement mines. Because Williams Lake has a small watershed and Fourth Lake sometimes loses much of its volume to a vulnerable karst aquifer, it is important to protect the water quality.



4th Lake: Looking north from Lynn's Pt



Historic lake names used. New maps mislabel Third Lake as Second Lake and Hidden Valley Lake as Third Lake.

Lakes and Wetlands. Historically, people have caught largemouth bass, chain pickerel, northern pike, and panfish in Fourth Lake. Williams Lake supports similar fish species. These lakes are ideally suited to fish survival because their pH is buffered by underlying carbonate bedrock. Wetlands on the Williams Lake property sport hardwood trees and rich ecosystems. At least one surface water body supports the endangered Northern Cricket Frog, near the northern terminus of its range. Like Fourth Lake, some of the many small unmapped property wetlands drain underground into one or more karst aquifers.



Northern Cricket Frog by Myriorama

Recreational Resources. Williams Lake and Fourth Lake are ideally suited for primary and secondary recreational contact and fishing. The rail bed that extends through the property was formerly part of the Walkkill Valley Railroad. It has been identified by the Ulster County Transportation Council in their Non-Motorized Transportation Plan as a priority project area of regional importance as a possible Rail Trail link between New Paltz and Kingston. In addition to the rail bed, a network of wide trails provide easy access to lake vistas, Lynn's Point, historic cultural features, and solitary forest retreats. These trails have been used for Olympic ski training and a host of bicycle and other races.