



# Johnson Lake Master Trails Plan

Prepared for Central Nebraska Public Power &  
Irrigation District

KM No. 1107224



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Johnson Lake, which covers about 2,500 surface acres, is one of the most popular recreational lakes in central Nebraska. The cabin development at the lake began with small structures to serve as fishing huts. Larger cabins soon followed and the 11-mile shoreline became lined with cabins by the late 1960s. There are now almost 900 homes and cabins at the lake.

The Lake offers a wide variety of on-the-water fun including boating, sailing, water skiing, Jet Skiing® and wakeboarding. Johnson Lake is known across the region for excellent fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing.

Other attractions include a public beach, two state campgrounds, an 18-hole golf course, and annual events such as the Memorial Day Community Garage Sale, Fourth of July Fireworks Show, fishing tournaments, and sailing regattas.

Johnson Lake has its own emergency medical services, with volunteers around the lake to help at a moment's notice. The Chapel of the Lake has weekly church services during the summer with local ministers filling the pulpit. Marinas and other concessionaires provide a full range of services and supplies.

Currently there are approximately three miles of hard surfaced trails along the southeast and southwest shorelines of the lake. Outside of these areas, most pedestrians and bicyclists do not have access to convenient off-road trails and therefore must share the road with motor vehicles around the majority of the lake. Heavy traffic volumes on holidays and weekends coupled with narrow roadways in many areas make bicycle and pedestrian use problematic.

Johnson Lake residents are actively promoting the goal of a trail circling the entire lake. Having a planning document such as this Master Trail Plan that identifies routes and facilities will enable the creation of a safe and accessible trail system. The Master Trail Plan serves as a guide for routes and projects and is subject to adjustments as conditions and experience necessitate.

While safety is the primary reason for residents to improve the trail system, other reasons to develop trails are to increase the enjoyment and quality of life for residents and visitors. Trails create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities for people of all ages. The popularity of trail related activity suggests that an innovative and strategic trail system can become a substantial force for economic development from both local and regional trail users. In addition, numerous studies have shown that the vast majority of respondents believe their homes would be easier to sell as well as increase market value because of a nearby trail.

## 2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District (CNPPID) provided funding for the development of a master trail plan for the Johnson Lake area. The expressed intent of CNPPID was that development of the plan be driven by Johnson Lake residents through a public participation process. The purpose of the plan is to build on past efforts and identify opportunities to create an off-road trail system.

The benefits of a trail system include increasing recreational opportunities and physical activity which lead to improving the quality of life and better health for a wide variety of users including pedestrians, joggers, in-line skaters, bicyclists, Nordic skiers, seniors, children, families, people with disabilities, local residents and visitors. Additional benefits of a trail system include improved community image, safe alternative transportation, economic development, and increased property values.

Currently there are approximately three miles of hard surfaced trails along the southeast and southwest shorelines. The existing trails, together with 1 mile of shared roadway across the top of the dam, connect the state campground at the inlet to the larger state campground on the east side of the lake and on to the outlet canal. These trails are heavily used by lake residents, their guests, and visitors to the camping areas. Pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists share the road around other portions of the lake.

The goal is to create a trail system around the lake that will provide a safe, accessible and convenient non-motorized recreation and transportation option for all residents and visitors from the residential and recreation areas to various attractions and destinations.

Objective 1: Develop a bicycle and pedestrian friendly trail system.

Action 1.1 Construct new trails on separate right of way where it can be done safely and efficiently.

Objective 2: Develop comprehensive support facilities.

Action 2.1 Install amenities, such as parking, restrooms, drinking fountains, shade facilities, gazebos, benches, waste receptacles, etc. where appropriate.

Objective 3: Enhance maintenance.

Action 3.1 Maintain a smooth trail surface, clean trail corridor regularly, keep signage in good condition.

### 3. NEEDS ANALYSIS

#### a. Existing facilities

Currently there are approximately three miles of hard surfaced off-road trails, one along the southeast and one along the southwest shorelines of the lake. The two trails are joined by Johnson Lake Drive going across the dam. Outside of those areas, pedestrians and bicyclists do not have convenient access to the off-road trails and must share the road with motor vehicles around the majority of the lake. Heavy traffic volumes and narrow roadways with speeds up to 45 miles per hour in some areas make bicycle and pedestrian use problematic and unsafe.

The Larry Roper Trail is a 1.1 mile long by 10-foot wide concrete trail beginning with a trailhead on the north end near the Outlet Canal and then winds south through the Game and Parks campground to the swimming beach at the east end of the dam.

The initial trail project was expanded with the addition of the Paul Matson Trail, an 8-foot wide concrete trail which starts at the Game & Parks campground near the Inlet Canal and follows the irrigation canal for 2.1 miles to the Sandy Point area in the middle of the dam.

Generally there are four types of signs: 1) safety signs to warn motorists and trail users of each other, 2) identify a route, 3) identify a destination, and 4) identify access. Good signage exists along the dam and for shared roadways in Gosper County, trail access parking, trail maps, and trail rules along the existing trails. Additional signage for shared roadways in Dawson County would help until off road trails are completed. As the trail system expands destination signage could be added to identify trail options, vista points, local services, etc.

Support facilities. Currently there is one Gazebo near Sandy Point, parking for 8 autos at the inlet trail head, 5 autos at Sandy Point, 10 autos at the outlet trailhead, and several parking lots within the State Campground. Restrooms are available in both the inlet and east side campgrounds. The existing trails have 8 rest areas plus benches at two more locations. Additional support facilities such as Gazebos or benches could potentially be located at various locations around the lake (see map)

#### b. Public Participation & Survey process

The Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District contracted with Kirkham Michael Engineering Consultants to facilitate a public process to include a wide variety of perspectives and interests in the development a Master Trail Plan. Public input involving as many people as possible was considered a vital component for further evolution of the Johnson Lake trail system.

To guide the 12 month planning process, a Steering Committee of residents from around the lake was created. Members of the Steering Committee included:

Linda Anderson - Mallard Beach	Jim & Jeanette Hain – Crappie Corner	Allan McClure - Mallard Beach
Tyson Atwood – Lakeview Acres	Scott & Kristy Hanchera – Dry Bay	Brian Miller - Mallard Beach
Clair Boroff – Kirby Point		Tom & Rhea Musil – Perch Bay
Gary Buehler – NE Cove	Bruce Hanson – East Shore	Stan & Linda Obermiller–S. Crappie Corner
Karla Denker – Dry Bay	Peg Hastings – North Cove	Chuck Olsen – East Shore
Brad Dillard – Sandy Point	Heidi High – Bass Bay	Sam Reno – Pelican Bay
Arlin & Jean Edeal – North Shore	Dick Hove – Mallard Cove	Tempe Roberts – Perch Bay Addition
Sheila Egenberger – Lakeview Acres	Jon Ivey – Pelican Bay	Bonnie Roland – NE Bay
Anne Eilers – Merriweather	Dianne Jeffrey – Bass Bay	Stan Vodehnal – North Point
Ron Fowler – Mallard Cove	Diane Jurgens - Merriweather	Joann Wieland – East Shore

In addition to guiding the planning process, responsibilities of the steering committee include: a) providing background information, b) identifying potential trail corridors, c) assisting public participation efforts, d) obtaining feedback, and e) coordinating with local entities to develop and implement a feasible Master Trail Plan.

The first meeting of the Steering Committee was August 18, 2011. There were 23 persons in attendance. Among the topics discussed during the meeting were: the planning process and schedule, potential trail users, and preparation for the first of two public information meetings (see Appendix A for meeting agenda, minutes and attendance log). During this initial Steering Committee meeting, a base map was prepared to identify residential neighborhoods, attractions and destinations, existing and potential trail corridors and support facilities.

On September 22, 2011 the first public information meeting was held in the Chapel of the Lake. There were 27 persons in attendance. The meeting was advertised by flyers posted or delivered by Steering Committee members. The purpose of the meeting was to share information and obtain public input. The base map prepared by the Steering Committee was made available for the public to evaluate and refine potential trail corridors, maximize opportunities and minimize potential impacts to adjacent property owners (see Appendix A for flyer and attendance log).

In October 2011, CNPPID mailed a map of potential trail routes and survey form to each of the nearly 900 homes around the lake. People were encouraged to review the various trail options and complete either an on-line or paper questionnaire. The map and questionnaire divided the lake area into 11 trail segments that included areas with and without existing trails. Alternative routes within the segments were presented as options A, B, C, etc. People were invited to provide input on the segment in which they resided or any other segment they were interested in. The survey form asked respondents to indicate what they like, what they do not like, suggest alternative improvements and make any general comments (see Appendix B for survey form and map).

The second meeting of the Steering Committee was held November 9, 2011 to evaluate the survey responses, refine the preferred trail routes and develop preliminary recommendations for construction phasing (see Appendix A for agenda and minutes). There were a total of 80 responses to the survey. Each lake area responded except one, Perch Bay Addition. See Appendix B for the full list of survey responses and map of trail route options considered. Below are summary responses by Trail Segment.

### Segment 1 – Larry Roper Trail

What I Like (benefits):

- ability to walk without worrying about traffic
- camaraderie of people on the trail
- great view and shade

What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- it is too far from where I live

Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- replace area cracked by sewer construction
- extend to road on golf course

### Segment 2 – Dam Roadway

What I Like (benefits):

- very scenic, great views of lake and golf course
- share the road signs

What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- having to share the road with vehicles
- high traffic area, no shoulder on road
- areas too narrow for road and trail

Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- widen road and add dedicated trail lane/shoulder
- add fill in northern most angle to create view shed, rest area and parking
- add fence or guardrail for safety

### Segments 3 & 4 – Matson Trail

#### What I Like (benefits):

- leads to important destinations (inlet campground, Sundy's)
- ease of getting on trail from Mallard area
- rest areas with gazebo and benches
- awesome opportunity to walk, bike, run & stay physically active, improves our area
- it goes by our cabin area and is very convenient
- landscaping, benches and memorial bricks

#### What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- canal is so close but fencing helps
- lack of trees, though some trees and shrubs have been planted
- path is narrower than Larry Roper section
- joints in segment 4 are rough

#### Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- mow and remove snow
- exit ramps every mile
- fence along canal especially close to campground where small children might be

### Segment 5 – Inlet Canal to County Road #750

#### What I Like (benefits):

- proposed route eliminates two very dangerous bridges for foot and bicycle traffic
- inlet canal crossing will be safe, scenic, and connect north and south inlet camping areas
- trail will be near north campground restroom

#### What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- dangerous inlet crossing

#### Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- new bridge across inlet

### Segment 6 – County Road #750 to Lakeview Acres Dr. 14F

#### What I Like (benefits):

- gets trail closer to year-round populated areas
- option A does not interfere with cabin owner privacy
- option A better for races and events
- prefer option B, crosses grassy “nature” area away from noise and traffic
- prefer option C, keeps trail away from main road, better access from cabins

#### What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- Option A is too close to road & provides poor access for Bass Bay residents
- Option C affects wetland and crosses private land behind three cabins

#### Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- Would like to see residents in this area support the trail
- Modify option B to maintain habitat, construct trail along west side of new NRD shrub & tree plantings then closer to cabins to improve access for Bass Bay residents, then swing out to road
- Keeping closer to trees provides shaded areas for cooler walking away from road traffic
- Consider spur to north point of Bass Bay with gazebo
- Strategically place rest areas and restrooms

### Segment 7 – Johnson Lake Drive from Drive 14F to North Point 13A

#### What I Like (benefits):

- Opportunity to ride or walk without using main road
- Close to Marina and B&B
- All things considered, the east roadside area is probably the best
- Option A grade line is good, keeps users off main road

#### What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- Do not put trail on west side of Johnson Lake Drive
- option B road is too busy at this point, do not place along the side of the road where a good easement in option A is available
- option C connects trail to Lake Shore Marina an important destination but it presents likely conflicts with cabins, street and trail

#### Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- keep trail near the trees at the edge of Marina parking, then through fence to pick up North Point area
- strategically placed rest areas and restrooms
- trail could run below the road from the Marina to the boat shop, although I understand there is a buried water line there

#### Segment 8 – Johnson Lake Drive 13A to County Road #751

##### What I Like (benefits):

- trail will finally come to Merriweather-yeah!
- takes traffic off of Johnson Lake Drive
- improving this section would be most important to safety, probably most dangerous segment, there have been personal injuries in this area
- nice scenic area owned by Central behind North Point and part of Merriweather
- option A or B is better than C

##### What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- option B property owners would need to grant easement
- option C will conflict with street traffic, garages, parking and privacy of residents

#### Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- until trail is separated, need shared roadway, pedestrian, speed limit, etc. signs
- work with North Point to avoid well house and adjust garden boundaries to accommodate trail
- move trail farther away from house at west entrance to North Cove and keep crossing high enough for proper drainage through ditch
- shift trail slightly to south of parking area at Northeast Cove
- move JLD crossing to south side of County Road #751

#### Segment 9 – Johnson Lake Drive from County Road #751 to County Road #428

##### What I Like (benefits):

- the grade lines across the road, only logical route to avoid conflicts with tight spaces between JLD and cabins
- crosses Road 751 and JL Drive at safest possible location
- gets trail users off busiest part of Johnson Lake Drive between Road 428 and Marina

- trail on field side will not have to cross each access road
- minimizes crossovers of JL Drive

What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- some private ownership on east side JL Drive will require cooperation
- utilities on west side of JL Drive

Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- could consider fine crusher rock surface to reduce cost

#### Segment 10 – County Road #428 to Outlet Bridge

What I Like (benefits):

- good continuity with segment 9
- limits crossings
- trail on east side of JL Drive has fewer conflicts with utilities
- like option B as an add-on and not a replacement for option A

What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- option A gets too remote from Kirby Point residents
- trail on lake side of JL Drive would conflict with storage and parking
- rural highway speed limit too high
- option B crosses JL Drive

Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- build both options A & B providing Kirby Point access to main trail
- have Central re-designate the two farm fields inside JL Drive for “Resource Protection” areas in the FERC plan. Kirby Point could be native grass demonstration area managed by nature conservancy with a trail through it. East Shore could be planted in trees for an aviary birding area with a trail through it.
- Request that Dawson County lower speed limit to match Gosper County

### Segment 11 – Outlet Bridge to Larry Roger Trail

#### What I Like (benefits):

- Connects the Larry Roper trail and access to the Captain’s Quarters

#### What I Do Not Like (concerns, obstacles):

- Gaps in existing wooden bridge are scary and unsafe

#### Suggested Improvements (alternative opportunities):

- Continue push for construction of a pedestrian lane or separate bridge along west side of vehicle bridge

General Comments This section has a total of 35 comments that were grouped into the following eight categories by the Selection Committee.

- Appreciative affirmation –complements with thanks and enthusiastic support - 18
- Safety concerns with walkers/bikers on JL Drive, and reference to an alternative to the “main road.” - 14
- Aesthetics, trees, rest areas, lakeside view - 6
- Circling the lake – “all the way around” – attractive destination - 6
- Personal use preferences - 4
- Trail surface preferences - 4
- Concern over road safety on Dam - 2
- Interior roads – do not use - 2
- Others mentioned only once include: Health benefits of trail, concern for maintenance, association participation in trail care, use of trail for races, trail cost/possible taxes, placement of mile markers on the trail, would like trail to be open to golf carts.

#### A sample of positive comments:

- The trail has been a wonderful addition to the lake.
- Good job . . . just finish it around the entire lake. It is a positive benefit to all.
- The trail should keep hikers and bikers off the main road. Could save someone’s life.
- We love everything about the trail and are excited about the expansion. Any way it can be accomplished is fine with us.
- We are very anxious to have a safe route around the lake.

#### A sample of concerns:

- Keep the trail away from the main road without taking up all the common areas.
- The trail system would be a great idea if people would use it. They want to be on the road with other people. I could care less if there was a trail.

- We would like to see the trail not cross JL Drive. This would not be safe.
- Some measure of assurance that trash and animal waste is taken care of.

See Appendix B for survey form, full list of survey responses and map of trail route options considered.

On February 17, 2012 a copy of the initial draft Master Trail Plan was sent to the Steering Committee members for review and comment. Two meetings were held by members of the Steering Committee in February and April to further refine the preferred trail routes and priorities in preparation for the May 7 public information meeting.

On May 7, 2012 the second public information meeting was held to share information, present maps with preliminary recommendations on the preferred trail routes and priorities, and solicit public feedback. See Appendix A for presentation materials and attendance log.

Over the Memorial Day weekend (May 26-28) there were poster board maps of the preferred trail routes on display at two locations on the Roper and Matson Trails. There were 16 volunteers that staffed the two trail sites for 30 hours over the three day period. There were a total of 410 visitors and residents logged in at the two sites. Appreciative and encouraging comments were provided by numerous persons for the existing and future trails. In addition to the people walking and biking, there were 17 dogs and 13 skaters recorded. Trail users included singles persons, families, youth and seniors. See Appendix C for trail use logs.

On May 30, 2012 the Steering Committee met to evaluate public feedback and make final recommendations on the preferred trail routes and priorities in the Master Trail Plan to be forwarded to Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District for consideration. There were 18 persons that registered in attendance. See Appendix A for agenda, minutes and registration log.

## 4. Implementation

### A. Recommended Improvements

In addition to public input, the steering committee considered technical criteria to select feasible projects such as: a) the safety of eliminating problems and improving existing conditions (i.e. high vehicular traffic volume and speed, b) minimizing intersecting driveways and side streets), c) avoiding existing bottlenecks and constraints, d) connectivity with the number of neighborhoods or destinations served, and e) existing opportunities such as planned roadway improvements.

These recommendations to Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District are from the Johnson Lake Hike/Bike Trail Steering Committee in consultation with Kirkham-Michael. June, 2012.

Review and planning for this project is considered with 11 segments, totaling a distance of approximately 10 miles of trail. Each segment has a unique character. The total blending creates a rich texture which is attractive as a destination site and raises the value of all lake properties.

***[Bold italics indicates enabling initiatives]***

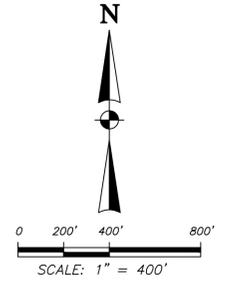
#### **Segment #1. Larry Roper Trail (1.05 mi)**

This first trail segment, in Nebraska Game and Parks, was dedicated in the summer of 2005. It is a 10' wide cement trail with three rest areas. Its setting is very "park-like," winding in and around trees and greens. The planning committee, chaired by the late Paul Matson, was appointed by JLDI. Larry Roper, park superintendent, personally laid out the trail route prior to his untimely death. The trail was paid for from a roads department grant and community contributions at a total cost of \$350,000. Paulsen, Inc. constructed it for \$176,435.50. A considerable portion of the balance was related to engineering studies required by the grant. In 2011 the trail was extended across the swimming beach parking lot to Johnson Lake Drive and a handicapped access was added at the trailhead and paid for by Central at a cost of \$10,868,50.

#### **Segment #2. Dam road from Game and Parks to Sandy Point (.96 mi.)**

Signage was installed in 2010 by Gosper County Roads, designating the stretch as a "share the road" way. Prior to that, alternative routes were considered south of golf course that did not gain traction. A suggestion that a new public road be constructed south of the golf course, closing the dam road to all but service vehicles and hikers/bikers met with strong resistance. The public likes the vista views which overlook the golf course and lake activity. The shared road can be improved by widening the surface to create walking/riding shoulders. ***The westernmost curve could be filled in*** to provide a scenic panoramic vista rest area with parking for viewers and fishermen. ***Central and Gosper county roads department could target to improve this segment in 2015.***

**See Segment 1 & 2 map on next page**



**LEGEND**

RECOMMENDED ROUTE	
RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ROUTE	
PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ROUTE	
EXISTING TRAILS	
POTENTIAL REST/VISTA AREAS	
CNPPB BOUNDARY	
FERC BOUNDARY	

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**Segment #3 Paul Matson Trail(b) (.66 mi.)**

Constructed through the golf course lease in 2011, the route was laid out by the trails committee and presents the character of a nature trail in a meadow. Central did the rough grading, and an 8' wide six inch thick concrete trail was laid by Paulsen Inc for \$89,120. This segment was paid from contributions from donors and grants through the Lexington Community Foundation. The foundation has been an important trails partner and continues to gather, hold, and expend monies for trail projects. A gazebo with landscaping was donated by Buzz's Marine and a rest area was placed in the "bottoms." Trailside parking is available between these two rest areas near Sandy Point. **Central is asked to mow three times per year.** Community volunteers mow in between those cuttings and keep the trail clean.

**Segment #4 Paul Matson Trail(a) (1.44 mi.)**

This segment was constructed in 2009 with the character of a "canal greenway" between the E-65 canal and Johnson Lake Drive. The impetus in 2008 for restarting the trail project after a lapse of several years was generated by "west shore" residents over safety issues due to the absence of an inner road system. A new generation of willing volunteers was appointed by JLDI to resume the trail project and that group continues as a core of the current steering committee. Ground breaking in 2009 and ribbon cutting ceremonies in 2010 were well attended by both residents and community leaders. A new awareness that the trail was being constructed on the coast to coast "American Discovery Trail" route added energy to the vision for a trail around the lake.

The committee laid out the route. Central prepared the ground. Miller Construction formed and poured an 8' wide x 6" thick cement trail with a bid of \$197,154.98, of which \$147,000 was paid by Central and \$50,000 came through the Lexington Community Foundation trail fund. The Tri-basin NRD allocated \$4,500 for planting grass and shrubs. The agriculture college at Curtis designed the plantings. Donors provided 12 memorial trees and benches for three rest areas. **In 2011 Central added a handicapped parking access. Central continues to mow the area 3 times per year** with neighborhood volunteers adding mowing as needed.

**See Segment 3 & 4 map on next page**

SEGMENT 5  
INLET TO COUNTY RD. #750

SUNDY'S  
FOOD

STATE CAMPGROUND

MALLARD COVE

SEGMENT 4  
PAUL MATSON TRAIL

JOHNSON LAKE

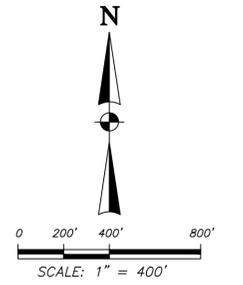
MALLARD BEACH

SEGMENT 3 TRAIL

DAM

SANDY POINT

SEGMENT 2  
DAM ROADWAY



LEGEND

RECOMMENDED ROUTE

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ROUTE

PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ROUTE

EXISTING TRAILS

POTENTIAL REST/VISTA AREAS

CNPPIP BOUNDARY

FERC BOUNDARY

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### Segment #5 Inlet Canal Area (.38 mi.)

[In 2011 the planning committee was expanded to 30 members to represent all of the area associations in the remaining segments 5-11 and to work with Kirkham-Michael to plan the completion of a trail around the lake.]

This recommended segment runs from the Matson trailhead across the inlet, through Game and Parks, then up the edge of a farm field to County road #750. **It shares top construction priority with segment #8 in 2012 for safety reasons.** It will eliminate two dangerous bridges, three sharp curves, and .48 mi. of shared vehicle roads.

Crossing the canal: **Place wire/net caging on the existing walkway for immediate use for hikers and dismounted bikers. If a power generating option is chosen, plan for a new crossing. If not, the current structure could be retrofitted for a pedestrian and bike crossing. It would need to be 7-10' wide for safe riding with good approaches. A new pre-manufactured pedestrian bridge could be placed alongside the existing structure, spanning the 75' canal. Or a railroad flatcar could be placed with welded posts, railings, and fencing.** A corporate sponsor could be sought for a bridge donation.

Going through Game and Parks: Their staff has already cut trees and identified a path. **Central would need to do some grading and stump removal.** If a culvert is needed, Game and Parks have one on the site. Stay to the north edge to allow for tent camping. Go on the north side of the trees past the outhouse, then turn into the open field west of the tree line behind Pelican Bay. **Negotiate with Mr. Kugler** for an easement or land trade to secure a 30' wide trail area (about 850' long) from G&P to county road #750.

### Segment #6 Bass Bay and Dry Bay areas (.6 mi.)

Cross over county road #750, following the power line. A Gazebo could be located in the open field to take advantage of the lake view to the southeast. **Negotiate with Dawson County Power to clear a path through the pines** for a trail and also for their service equipment. This route offers a nice tree lined meadow. It lies in a depression, and **some fill with a culvert may be necessary.** Exit the trees and cross the Bass Bay drive to their well house. A trail head grass parking area can be utilized there. **Construct this part of segment #6 (.11 mi.) along with segment #5 in the fall of 2012** in order to connect the 49 homes in Bass Bay with the trail system. The (B) alternative route would cross the trees closer to JL Drive, coming out between the second and third large tree at the Bass Bay entrance.

Proceed through or skirt around the new tree plantings to the open field behind Bass Bay toward the wetlands. (When the new plantings grow larger, they would provide the snow break and the present snow fence could be removed.) At the wetlands, there are two options:

Option (A) Dry Bay Bridge route: (.49 mi.) Avoiding the designated wetland at the north end of the field, follow an opening between a line of trees and wetland to the end of Bass Bay to the east side of Dry Bay. Construct a bridge over Dry Bay to Central's narrow lot, then over Dry Bay Road and along the SID easement to the ditch of Johnson Lake Drive. Using this route, a rest area could be located at the Dry Bay mouth point for a spectacular panoramic vista and would result in a beautiful natural habitat combined with water and bridge—perhaps the most spectacular section in the whole trail project.

The Steering Committee, charged to ***“identify opportunities to create a safe, accessible and convenient off-road trail system around the lake,”*** sees Option (A) fulfilling this mandate as the safest and most scenic route. However, at this time the steering committee defers to privacy and view obstruction concerns raised by the Dry Bay Association and offers an alternative Option (B).

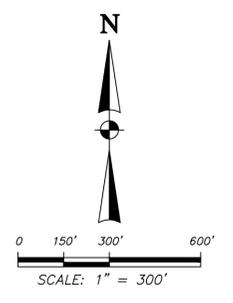
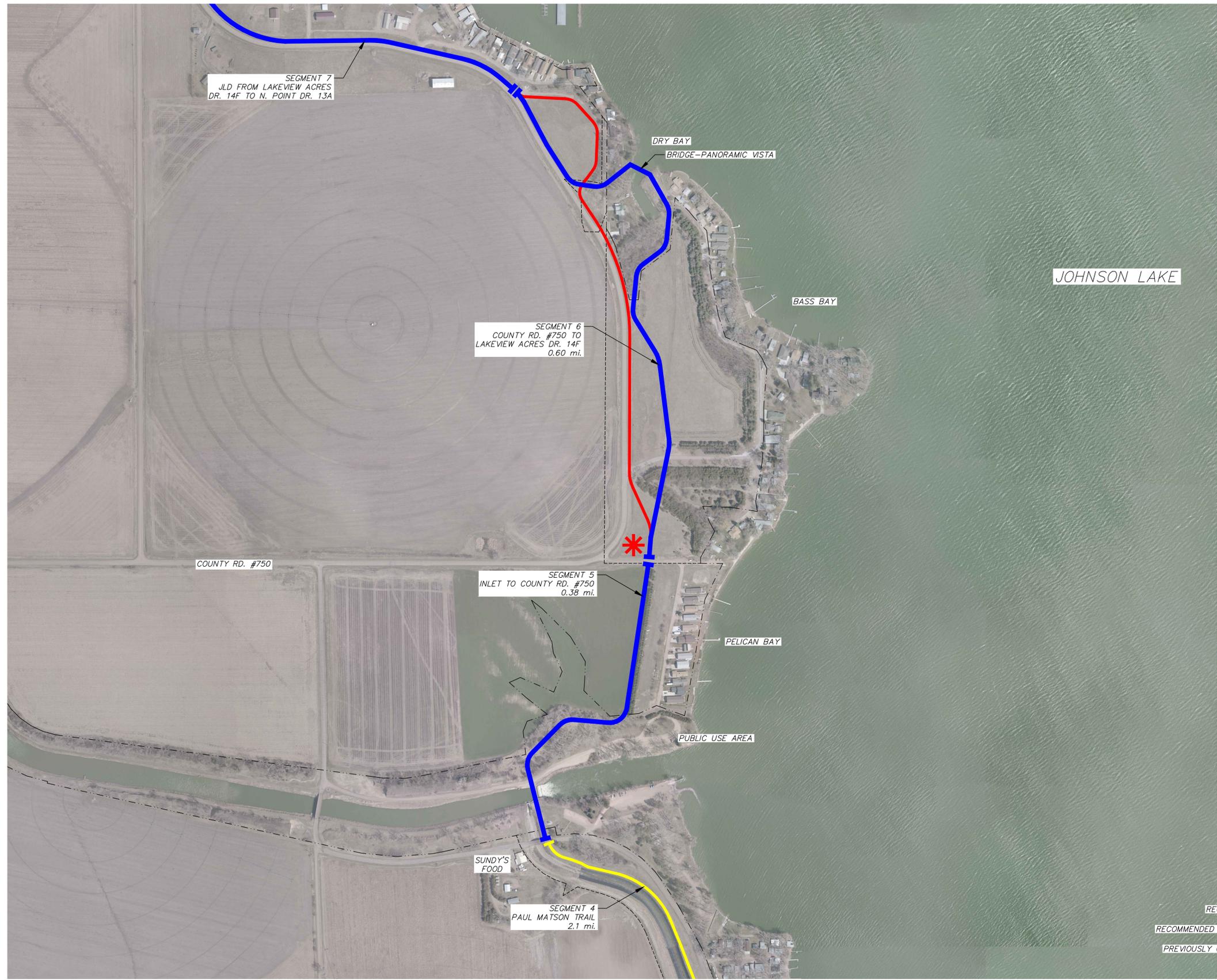
Option (B) JL Drive Berm route: (.43 mi.) Cross the ditch to the shoulder of Johnson Lake Drive (about 8’ wide with a steep drop-off) and continue alongside the wetlands to the field beyond Dry Bay Road and on to Drive 14F. This road shoulder route is less safe--or perhaps unsafe--creating safety risks for a multiple use trail. It also raises trail maintenance issues caused by snow removal along Johnson Lake Drive. ***Ask Jon Mooberry, Dawson County Road Superintendent, to design a safety sensitive route bordering Johnson Lake Drive.***

A portion of Option (A) could still be built as a complementary Dry/Bass Bay Spur nature trail (920’, .17 mi.) to the panoramic vista point. In the future, a bridge could be added with consultation and concurrence of the Lakeview Acres, Bass Bay, and Dry Bay Area Associations. This would result in closure and abandonment of the roadside trail.

***Construct this remaining stretch of Segment. 6 (.43 mi.) along with Segment. 11 (.75) in 2013.***

**See Segment 5 & 6 map on next page**

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**LEGEND**

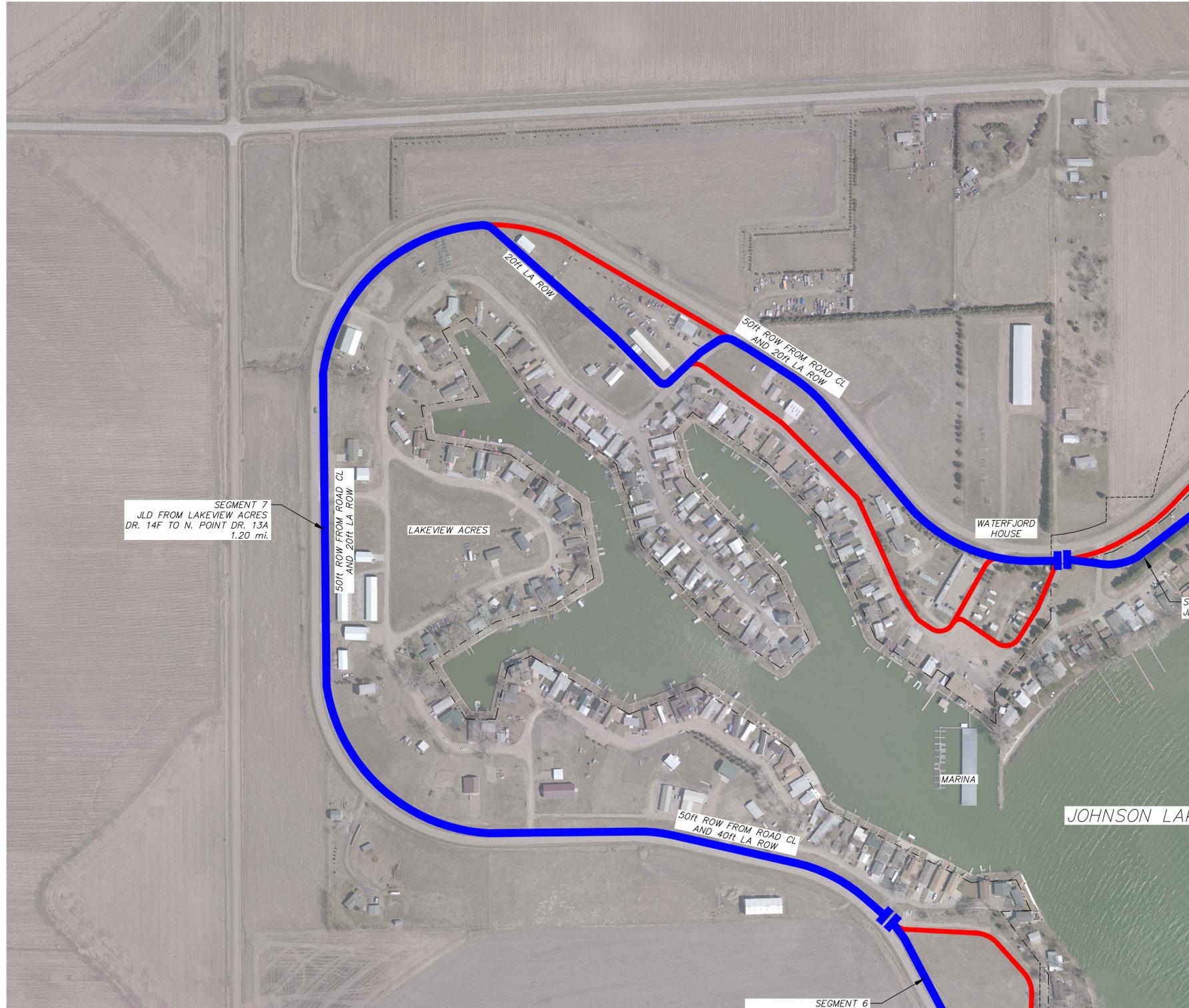
RECOMMENDED ROUTE	
RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ROUTE	
PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ROUTE	
EXISTING TRAILS	
POTENTIAL REST/VISTA AREAS	
CNPPIP BOUNDARY	
FERC BOUNDARY	

**Segment #7 Lakeview Acres (1.2 mi.)**

The current Johnson Lake Drive was constructed by the developer of Lakeview Acres with a 100' right of way (50' from center line) and then turned over to Dawson County. It is a high and open road with good sight lines, therefore safer to ride even without paved shoulders. ***So trail construction here can be lowest priority, scheduled for 2015.*** The Association is platted with additional 20' easements next to road right of way, which offers an ideal location for a trail. From Dr.14F to Dr.14D there is a 40" right of way on a steep embankment from JLD to the lower road. The trail could run at the shoulder of JLD, lower on the bank with a short retaining wall, or at the edge of the association road (where parking would be problematic). Jon Mooberry, the new Dawson County roads superintendent, has trail building experience and would be an asset to work with the association to pinpoint locations. The mini park at Dr. 14C offers covered picnic tables for an ideal rest area. Just beyond that drive a large culvert crosses under JLD, ***requiring an additional culvert or short bridge.*** Between Dr 14B and 14A, the 20' right of way moves away from JLD to serve several storage sheds. The 8' trail would need to be located to one side to allow room for vehicle passage and avoid a DCPD underground power line. From the right of way to Dr. 14A, the trail would need to run a short distance along lots 9 and 10, (Johnson Lake Marine) where the 20' right of way returns next to JLD. A buried water line runs in the right of way to the well house at Lakeview Marina. The trail could either be placed next to or over it with asphalt or fine rock surface. ***Negotiate with Lake Shore Marina for a trail passage between their two access drives.***

**See Segment 7 map on next page**

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SEGMENT 7  
JLD FROM LAKEVIEW ACRES  
DR. 14F TO N. POINT DR. 13A  
1.20 mi.

50ft ROW FROM ROAD CL  
AND 20ft LA ROW

LAKEVIEW ACRES

20ft LA ROW

50ft ROW FROM ROAD CL  
AND 20ft LA ROW

WATERFJORD  
HOUSE

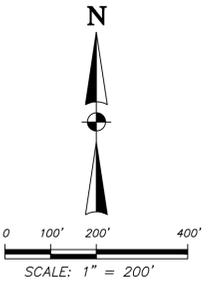
SEGMENT 8  
JLD FROM N. POINT DR. 13A TO COUNTY RD. #751

50ft ROW FROM ROAD CL  
AND 40ft LA ROW

MARINA

JOHNSON LAKE

SEGMENT 6  
COUNTY RD. #750 TO  
LAKEVIEW ACRES DR. 14F



LEGEND

RECOMMENDED ROUTE	
RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ROUTE	
PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ROUTE	
EXISTING TRAILS	
POTENTIAL REST/VISTA AREAS	
CNPPIP BOUNDARY	
FERC BOUNDARY	

revisions

JOHNSON LAKE, NEBRASKA

NEBRASKA

JOHNSON LAKE

RECREATIONAL TRAIL MAP  
SEGMENT 7

date: 10/11  
designed: JJK  
checked: RZ  
plot no.: 1107224

SHEET  
3

**Segment #8 Marina to Road #751 (1.09 mi.)**

Johnson Lake Drive on this stretch serves four area associations, and is the busiest and most dangerous section of the road. Vehicles coming from Lexington on #751 enter the road, drive .65 mi., then depart continuing west. Dawson County recently lowered the speed limit from 55 to 45 mph, but it is still a dangerous road, as is testified by a serious accident last July. Therefore, **this segment is positioned at the top of the “to construct” list for the fall of 2012**, along with segment #5. The grade lines are good, requiring little dirt work.

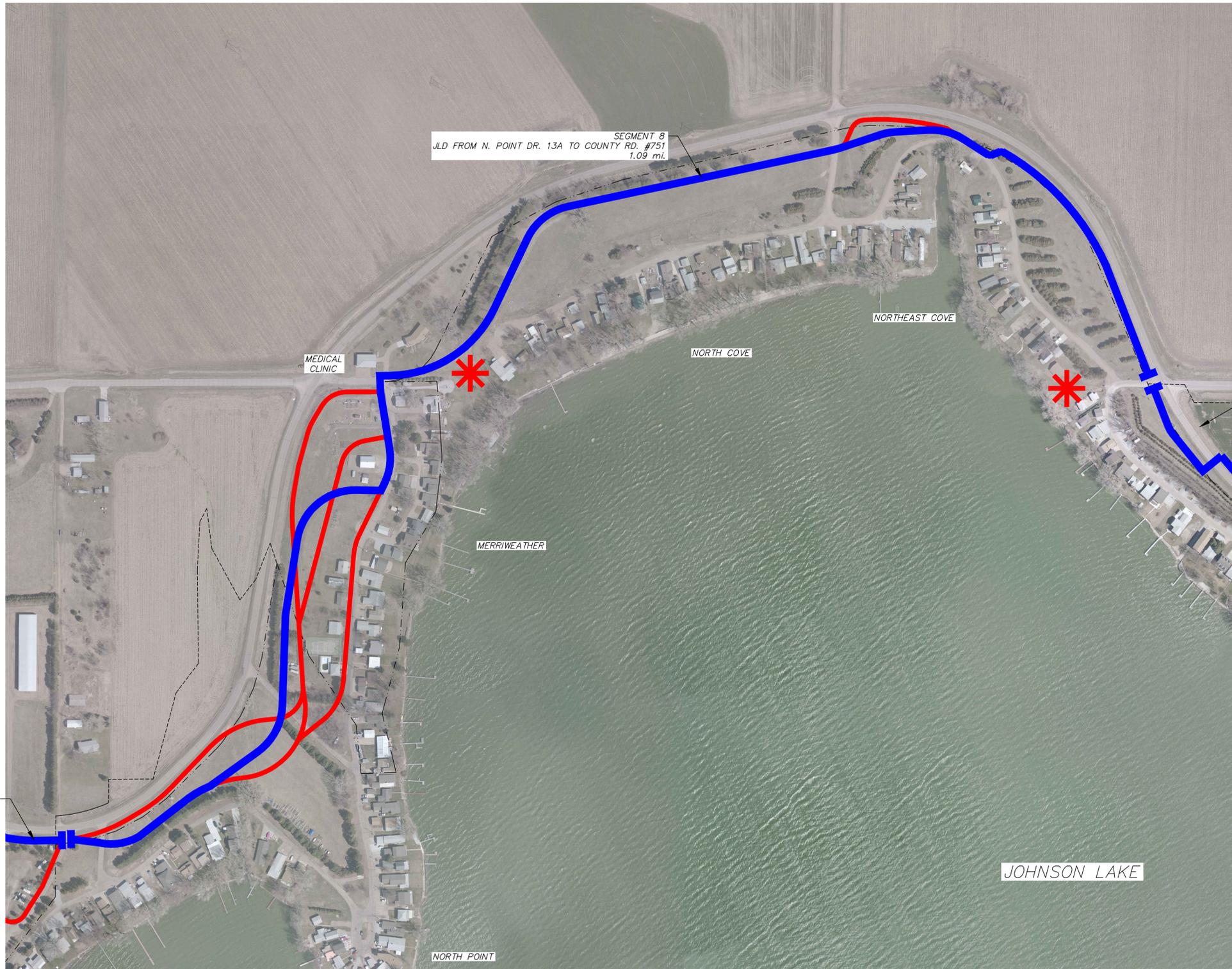
From the marina, follow the north side of the North Point pine tree line across an open field to Merriweather. The preferred route in Merriweather invites the lot owners along with Mr. Holen, who owns the open field, to each allow 10-12 ft for an easement, then run the trail over their common property lines. The Merriweather Association owns a 50' wide street, so another option would locate a trail at its west side. **The Association is an appropriate forum in which to address these considerations.**

At the first county road #751 (Drive 11 and medical building), follow the old county road and SID easement east into the open area owned by Central. A rest area or gazebo could be located next to the trail in the field to take advantage of a panoramic vista of landscaping, shoreline, and lake. Then **cross the ditch with a culvert or bridge** into North Cove area. Stay to the west along the tree line to Drive 10. A large cottonwood tree along the way would accommodate a bench for shaded rest. (distance - .35 mi.)

At Drive 10, where trailhead parking could be placed, stay to the outside of the trees to the cove, **where the road would need to be moved about 10'** to locate the trail on the present roadbed, while avoiding a DCPD underground service line. Proceed behind the trees inside Johnson Lake Drive to County Road #751. (distance – .30 mi.)

A potential rest area, gazebo, and trailhead parking could be located in Central's pie shaped lot over the old county road for a panoramic vista view of the lake.

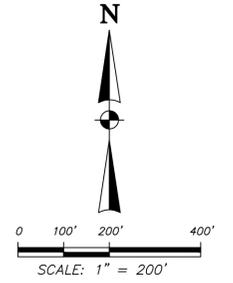
**See Segment 8 map on next page**



SEGMENT 7  
JLD FROM LAKEVIEW ACRES  
DR. 14F TO N. POINT DR. 13A

SEGMENT 8  
JLD FROM N. POINT DR. 13A TO COUNTY RD. #751  
1.09 mi.

SEGMENT 9  
JLD FROM COUNTY RD. #751 TO ROAD #428



- LEGEND**
- RECOMMENDED ROUTE ———
  - RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ROUTE - - - - -
  - PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ROUTE ———
  - EXISTING TRAILS ———
  - POTENTIAL REST/VISTA AREAS \*
  - CNPPIP BOUNDARY - - - - -
  - FERC BOUNDARY - · - · -

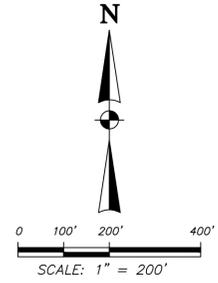
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**Segment #9 Road 751 to road 428 – On fields east of Johnson Lake Drive. (1.05 mi.)**

The trail now moves to an “agriculture” setting. Given the four narrow stretches that lie to the inside of JLDr. over the next several miles, there is simply not space to accommodate a trail, parking, gardening, and boat trailers. A well marked crosswalk could either be located at the intersection, or moved 50 yards south, until it would cross JLDr. near the start of the pine tree planting. The field is ***a Central farm lease (.67 mi.), and a 30' allowance would be desirable. Some fill and perhaps a culvert may be required across from the EMS property.*** A second parcel to be crossed is privately owned (.17 mi.) by ***Mr. Brown, where an easement would need to be negotiated.*** The third parcel is a triangle grass field owned by Central. ***Segment 9 can be considered for construction in 2014,*** along with a segment 10.

**See Segment 9 map on next page**

SEGMENT 8  
JLD FROM N. POINT DR. 13A TO COUNTY RD. #751



**LEGEND**

RECOMMENDED ROUTE	
RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ROUTE	
PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ROUTE	
EXISTING TRAILS	
POTENTIAL REST/VISTA AREAS	
CNPPIP BOUNDARY	
FERC BOUNDARY	

SEGMENT 10  
ROAD #428 TO OUTLET BRIDGE

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**Segment #10 - 428 to East Shore Drive 1A (.84 mi.)**

Continuing south on the east side of JLD, the farm lease inside the FERC boundary and around the airport offers a continuing “ag” setting with additional natural resource features. Near Drive 1A, the trail would cross JL Dr. to the west and into a farm lease field behind East Shore. Two complementing trails would improve trail access, adding variety and texture to the whole system.

- a. Kirby Point Loop (.45) at the edge of a farm lease field, with two crosswalks of JLD. That field could be also designated as a natural resource area for native grasses.
- b. The dyke that forms the FERC boundary east of the airport runway and along a county road (1.17 mi.) could be mowed and the resulting grass/dirt path could be used for a bridle trail, walking trail, or mountain bike path. **One depression would need to be filled, and a 12'x .22 mi. grass strip from the farm lease south of the dyke would need to be planted.** From atop the dyke, one can see into the Platte valley, across a field with a wetland, and the lake. It is one of the best kept secret panoramic vistas around!

**These three trail sections (1.32 mi) would be scheduled for construction 2014,** along with segment #9.

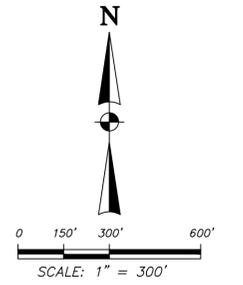
**Segment #11 – Dr. 1A to the Roper Trailhead (.6 mi. plus .09 spur = .69 mi.)**

Allow the trail from the crosswalk near Drive 1A to meander through the triangular field to a midpoint at its south side. **Ask Central to cut a section out of the dirt mound at a point where the bank narrows.** Cross the trail over the south East Shore access road and through the newly cut bank. Build a .09 mi. (475') concrete trail spur west along the outlet canal to the lake point for a gazebo with a panoramic vista. The trail spur could be held close to the mound, leaving room for Central's canal maintenance vehicles, but blocked to public vehicles, which could be parked at a new trailhead. Fishermen could walk to the point from their vehicles. A platform for handicapped fishermen could accompany the gazebo at this popular bank fishing spot.

**The dirt from the mound cut could be moved to the dyke route and ditch crossings. Central could continue to remove bank dirt from the cut to the east as needed. East Shore residents request that the remaining higher bank to the west of the cut be left as a buffer** for their area and as a natural resource area for birds and animals. The dirt mound can also be used to teach the history of the construction of the CNPPID system –also seen along the inlet canal. It is the only remaining evidence along the lake shoreline. **The triangular field could be planted with trees and grasses and designated as a natural resource area, integral to the remaining mound.**

From the mound cut, the trail would turn east along the north side of the canal to the new bridge, scheduled for 2014, and on to the Roper trailhead to complete the 10 mile circle around the lake. **Seek permission from Captain's Quarters for the trail to stay close to the canal.** Cement curbing should be installed against the trail, which could be driven over (boat ramp, etc.) but not parked upon. **This preferred route should be constructed in 2013 along with the Dry Bay/Bass Bay portion of segment #6,** removing bike traffic from another dangerous curve.

**See Segment 10 & 11 map on next page**



**LEGEND**

RECOMMENDED ROUTE	
RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ROUTE	
PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ROUTE	
EXISTING TRAILS	
POTENTIAL REST/VISTA AREAS	
CNPPIP BOUNDARY	
FERC BOUNDARY	

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**B. Priority/Construction Schedule**

The proposed project schedules may change according to available funds, changing priorities, or other factors.

An aggressive four (4) year construction schedule in order to complete the circle in ten years can be summarized as follows:

2012, Segments 8 (1.09 mi) and 5 to Bass Bay Drive (.49 mi) = **1.58 miles**

2013, Segments 11 (.69 mi) and 6, Bass Bay Dr. to Dr. 14F (.49 mi.) = **1.18 miles**

2014, Segments 9 (1.05 mi.) and 10 (.84) =1.89 mi.

    Add Kirby Loop (.48mi) = **2.37 miles**

    Add Dyke way grass. No construction, only small fill and grass

2015 Segments 7 (**1.2 mi.**) and 2 (dam road improvements)

**Total new trail to be constructed = 6.33 miles**

A less aggressive eight (8) year construction plan would build one segment per year in the following order:

2012 Segment 8

2013 Segment 5+ with bridge

2014 Segment 11

2015 Segment 6 with bridge

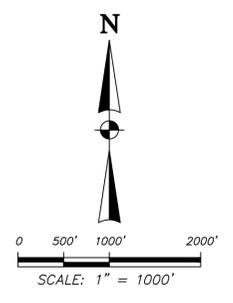
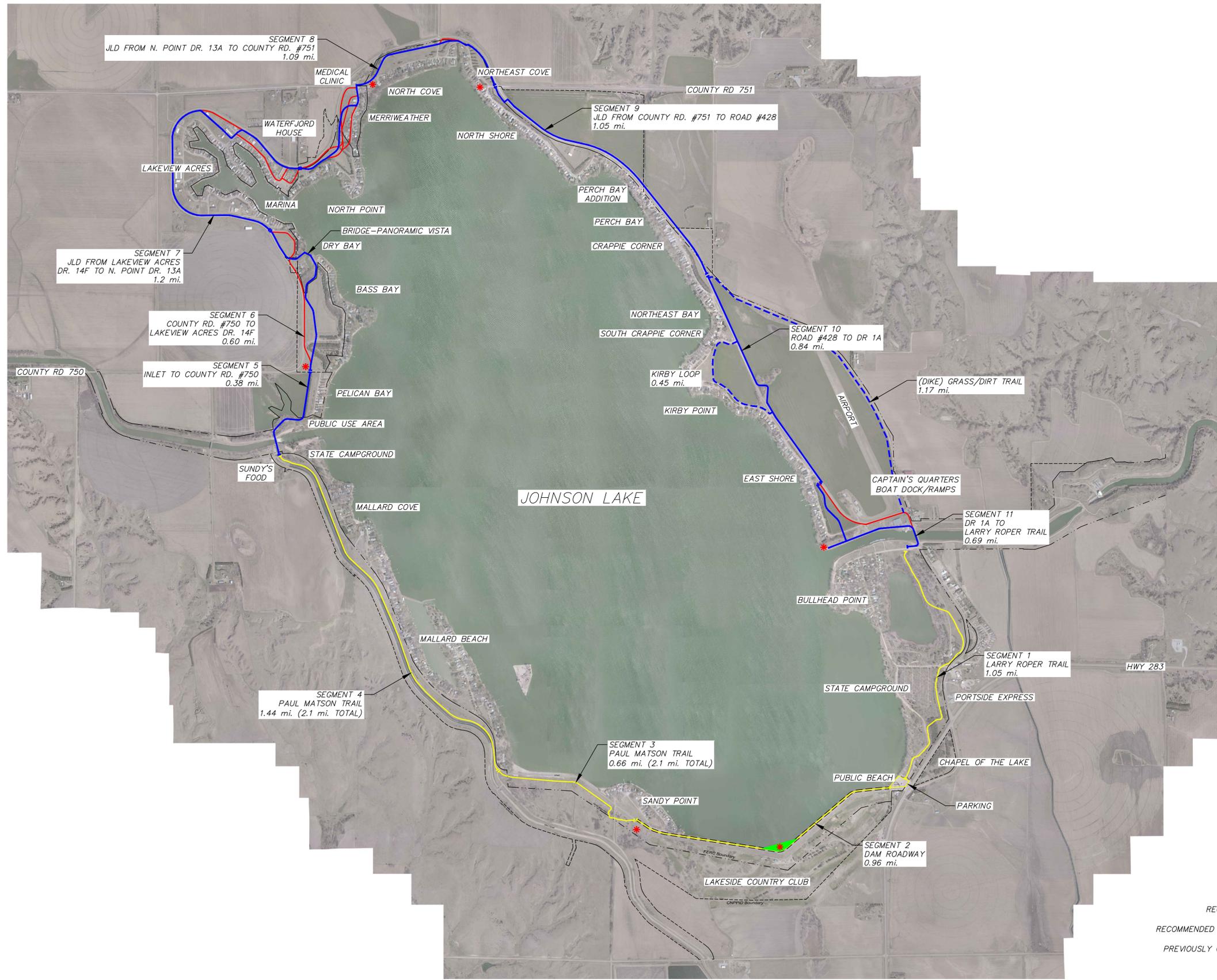
2016 Segment 9

2017 Segment 10

2018 Segment 7

2019 Segment 2

**See Master Trail map of all segments on next page**



- LEGEND**
- RECOMMENDED ROUTE ———
  - RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ROUTE - - - - -
  - PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED ROUTE ———
  - EXISTING TRAILS ———
  - POTENTIAL REST/VISTA AREAS \*
  - CNPPID BOUNDARY - - - - -
  - FERC BOUNDARY - · - · -

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