Chapter 7: Parklands and Recreational Resources

7-1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter evaluates the potential impacts of project alternatives on the recreation, parklands, and open space resources in the study area. Where adverse impacts are identified, the chapter recommends mitigation measures and strategies.

7-2 REGULATORY CONTEXT

Parklands are protected under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 U.S.C. § 303, as amended) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 23 CFR § 774). A Section 4(f) evaluation is provided in Chapter 23, "Section 4(f) Evaluation".

There are similar requirements for land acquired or developed under Section 6(f) of the U.S. Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. § 460 L-8f) and Section 110 of the Urban Parks and Recovery Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. § 2501–2514). However, there are no Section 6(f) properties within the project's study area.

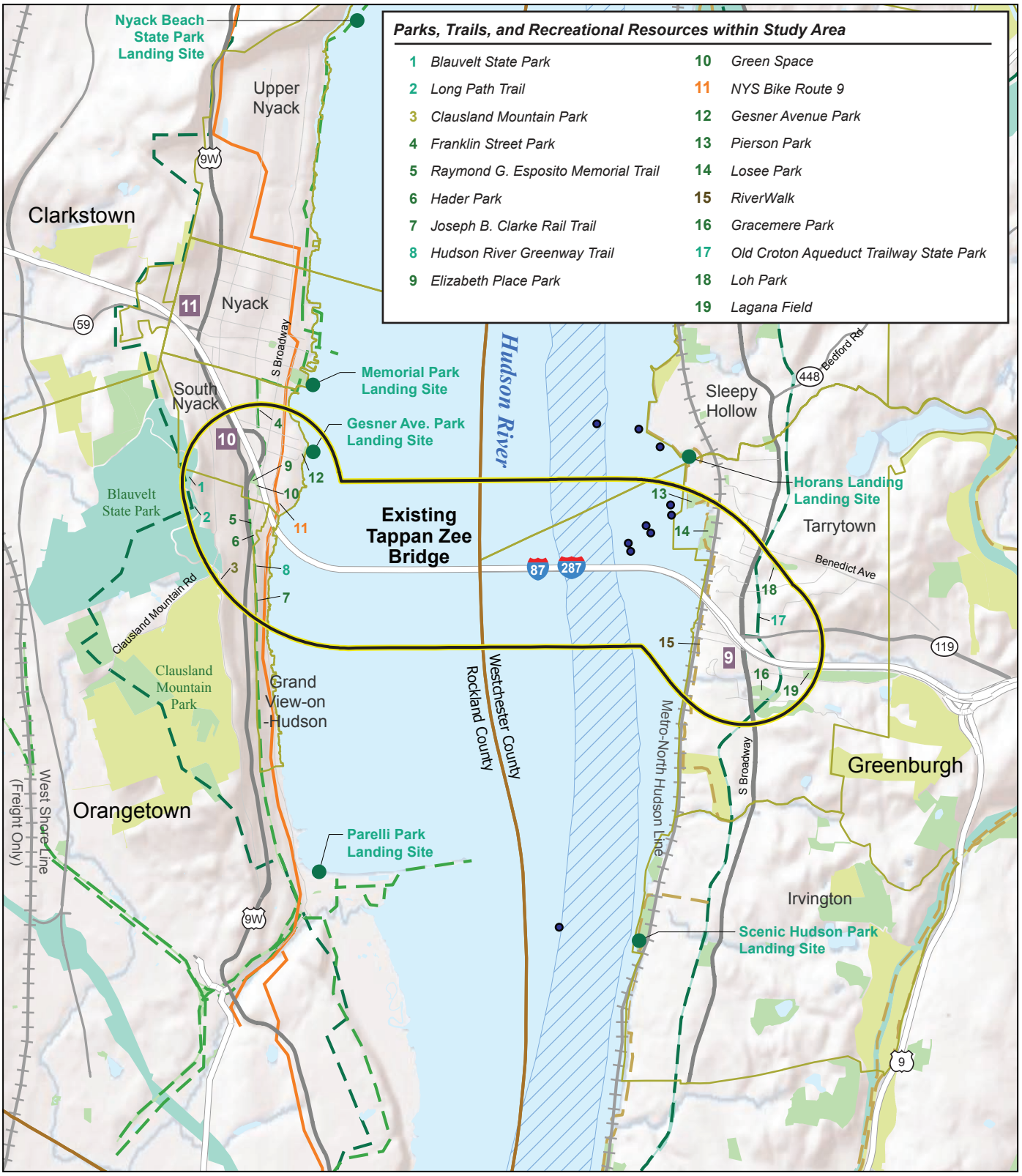
7-3 METHODOLOGY

Recreational resources that could potentially be affected by the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project include parks, recreation areas, state and local trails, and National Natural Landmarks. There are no wildlife or waterfowl refuge areas within the study area. Any parkland or other protected recreational resources identified within or bordering the study area are presented in this chapter. Parks located along the Hudson River within close viewing proximity of the Tappan Zee Bridge are also included due to the potential for visual impacts in the study area.

The information for parklands was compiled through internet research, conversations with the parks and recreation departments of the relevant jurisdictions, site surveys, and use of maps and/or geographic information systems (GIS) databases provided by Rockland and Westchester Counties.

7-4 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Table 7-1 lists the parklands and trails identified in the study area, together with information on each resource's location, type, size, and description. They are also shown on **Figure 7-1**, with a corresponding map code provided in the table. The study area contains 13 parks, trails, recreational resources, or National Natural Landmarks in Rockland County and 7 in Westchester County.



TAPPAN ZEE HUDSON RIVER CROSSING
Environmental Impact Statement

Figure 7-1
Parklands and Recreational Resources

Table 7-1
Study Area Parklands and Trails

Jurisdiction	Location	Park or Trail Name	Type of Resource	Size (acres)[1]	Description/Notes	Map Code
Rockland County						
State	Orangetown	Blauvelt State Park	Passive	590.00	Hiking trails, picnicking areas	1
Interstate	Countywide	Long Path Trail	Passive	326.00 miles long	Runs from Fort Lee, NJ to Thatcher State Park near Albany	2
County	Orangetown	Clausland Mountain Park	Passive	513.00	Wooded mountain natural area with scenic overlooks, hiking trails	3
Village	Orangetown - South Nyack	Franklin Street Park	Active	2.20	Running/walking trail	4
Village	Orangetown - South Nyack	Raymond G. Esposito Memorial Trail	Passive	0.90 miles long	Runs along west bank of Hudson River	5
Village	Orangetown - Grandview	Hader Park	Passive	2.00	Follows old railroad right-of-way, part of Hudson River Greenway Trail	6
Town	Orangetown	Joseph B. Clarke Rail Trail	Passive	4.00 miles long	Part of Hudson River Greenway Trail System	7
State	Countywide	Hudson River Greenway Water Trail	Active	256 miles long	Runs the length of the Hudson River, from Hadley in the Adirondack Park and Whitehall on the Champlain Canal to Battery Park City in Manhattan, with kayak and canoe launch points every 10 miles, and campsites every 15 miles.	8
Village	Orangetown - South Nyack	Elizabeth Place Park	Active	0.81	Play area, picnic tables, field, basketball hoop	9
Village	Orangetown - South Nyack	Green Space	Passive	0.05	Benches	10
State	Statewide	New York State Bike Route 9	Active	339 miles long	Long distance on-road bicycle route	11
Village	Orangetown - South Nyack	Gesner Avenue Park	Passive	0.05	Mini-riverfront park	12
State/Private	Countywide	Palisades of the Hudson National Natural Landmark	--	1,900 acres	National Natural Landmark rock formations along the western shore of the Hudson River from Fort Lee, NJ to Haverstraw, NY.	--
Westchester County						
Village	Greenburgh - Tarrytown	Pierson Park	Active	18.00	Picnic area, pavilion, tennis courts, platform tennis courts, basketball, playground, bocce court, gazebo	13
Town	Greenburgh - Tarrytown	Losee Park	Active	7.40	Village park on Hudson River with lighted ball fields, picnic area, playground.	14
County	Countywide	RiverWalk Trail	Passive	51.50 miles long	Mixed-use recreation trail for biking, jogging, walking	15
Town	Tarrytown	Gracemere Park	Passive	4.10	Neighborhood park	16
State	Countywide	Old Croton Aqueduct Trailway State Park	Passive	209.78 miles long	Unpaved trail running along Hudson River	17
Village	Greenburgh - Tarrytown	Loh Park	Passive	1.40	Picnic area, open space	18
Town	Greenburgh - Tarrytown	Lagana Field	Active	1.00	Small park with ball field, playground, tennis courts	19

Notes: [1] This column indicates the full acreage or length of the parkland or trail resource. **Figure 7-1** shows the portion of the resource that falls within the study area.

Sources: Rockland County GIS Portal, https://geopower.jws.com/rockland/MapsPage.jsp?folder_currentfolder=14721, accessed November 3, 2011.

Hudson River Valley Greenway, http://www.hudsongreenway.ny.gov/home.aspx, accessed November 3, 2011.

Parks are divided into two categories: active and passive. Active parks often include trails, playgrounds, ball fields, pools, tennis courts, etc. Passive parks emphasize open

space and involve low levels of development, including picnic areas and trails. Of the total study area parks, recreational resources, or trails within Rockland County, four are active and eight are passive. In Westchester County, three parks or trails are active, and four are passive.

In addition to the designated parks and trails, the Hudson River is used as a recreational resource for boating. There are several private marinas and municipal boat ramps in close proximity to the study area. Recreational boaters use these marinas and launches to access the Hudson River and can be expected to navigate through the study area to reach a destination point.

None of the parkland or recreational resources within the study area was funded through Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act (LWCA).

The following describes the parklands and recreational resources in close proximity to the Interstate 87/287 right-of-way.

7-4-1-1 ELIZABETH PLACE PARK AND ADJACENT GREEN SPACE AREA

Elizabeth Place Park is a public park in the Village of South Nyack. The park is situated on an approximately 0.81-acre triangular parcel. It is located on the southwest side of Interstate 87/287, north of Elizabeth Place, and east of the Raymond G. Esposito Memorial Trail and Route 9W. The park features active recreation opportunities, including a basketball court, play area, open space, picnic areas, and a dog park.

Southeast of Elizabeth Place Park is a small, triangular, green space area located on the opposite side of South Broadway. It comprises approximately 0.05 acres and is bounded by Interstate 87/287 to the east, South Broadway to the west, and a residential property to the south. This small green space area contains three benches and serves as passive open space.

7-4-1-2 PALISADES OF THE HUDSON NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARK

The Palisades of the Hudson (the Palisades) comprise approximately 1,900 acres of land in Bergen County, New Jersey and Rockland County, New York. The Palisades extend through the study area in a north-south direction. The eastern boundary of the Palisades generally follows the west shore of the Hudson River from just south of the George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee, New Jersey, north approximately 22 miles to Haverstraw, New York. The western boundary of the Palisades parallels the Hudson River. The Palisades ranges from approximately 0.6 to 1.5 miles in width.[1]

According to the National Park Service, the Palisades is the best example of a thick diabase sill formation known in the United States. The rock formations of the Palisades comprise columnar jointing, with olivine zone and thermal metamorphic effects, and glaciated crest.[2]

[1]US Fish and Wildlife Service, http://library.fws.gov/pubs5/web_link/text/pal_form.htm, access November 11, 2011.

[2]National Park Service, http://www.nature.nps.gov/nnl/site.cfm?Site=PAHU-NJ, accessed November 11, 2011.

7-4-1-3 HUDSON RIVER GREENWAY WATER TRAIL

The Hudson River Greenway Water Trail is a 256-mile stretch of the Hudson River and its tributaries. There are two starting points in the north: the Town of Hadley in the Adirondack Park, and the Town of Whitehall on the Champlain Canal. The Water Trail ends at Battery Park City in Manhattan. The Water Trail features kayak and canoe launch points every 10 miles, and campsites every 15 miles. There are six launch points within or in close proximity to the study area, the Nyack Beach State Park (Upper Nyack), Memorial Park (Nyack), Gesner Avenue Park (South Nyack), Parelli Park (Orangetown), Horan's Landing (Sleepy Hollow), and Scenic Hudson Park (Irvington). Canoeists and kayakers using the Hudson River Greenway Water Trail traverse beneath the existing Tappan Zee Bridge to access these landing sites.

7-4-1-4 HUDSON RIVER RECREATIONAL BOATING

The Hudson River is also used by sail boaters, power boaters, and other personal water craft users for recreational purposes.

7-4-1-5 RIVERWALK

RiverWalk is a shared-use path that represents a substantial segment of the Hudson River Valley Greenway system in Westchester County. Once complete, RiverWalk will span 51.5 miles and fourteen municipalities in Westchester County. It is currently being developed through a series of discrete projects that are being constructed by the county, local municipalities, and private developers, among others. As currently proposed, RiverWalk will traverse beneath the Tappan Zee Bridge. However, this section has not yet been constructed.

7-5 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

7-5-1 NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

At this time, there are no known or planned improvements to parks or trails within the study area in Rockland County.

In Westchester County, it is anticipated that sections of the partially completed RiverWalk, which traverses and extends beyond the study area, would continue to be constructed. RiverWalk is a planned, 51.5-mile pathway along the Hudson River that would link village centers, historic sites, parks, and river access points via a connection of trails, esplanades, and boardwalks. Portions of this trail have been constructed to the north and south of the Tappan Zee Bridge. In addition, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council's (NYMTC's) 2008-2012 Transportation Improvement Program includes a project to establish one mile of trail to link Lyndhurst and Sunnyside historic sites in the Town of Greenburgh.

The No Build Alternative would not change horizontal or vertical clearances of the navigable channel through the Hudson River. Therefore, it would have no effect on recreational boating in the study area.

The No Build Alternative would not adversely impact any existing or planned parklands or recreational areas within the study area. However, the No Build Alternative would not provide for a shared-use path across the Hudson River, and pedestrians and bicycles would continue to be prohibited on the Tappan Zee Bridge. Thus, the No Build

Alternative would not enhance or improve recreational opportunities in Rockland or Westchester Counties.

7-5-2 REPLACEMENT BRIDGE ALTERNATIVE

The Replacement Bridge Alternative would include a shared-use (bicycle and pedestrian) path across its north structure between the Esposito Trail in Rockland County and Route 9 in Westchester County. This shared-use path, and the preservation of the future ability to connect RiverWalk beneath the new bridge, is consistent with the Village of Tarrytown's 2007 Comprehensive Plan. The shared-use path is also consistent with the stated public policy goals of Rockland and Westchester Counties, as it would increase public access to a network of bike and pedestrian pathways and the Hudson River. Therefore, the Replacement Bridge Alternative's shared-use path would be a benefit to parklands and recreational resources.

The Replacement Bridge Alternative would directly impact two open spaces in Rockland County—Elizabeth Place Park and an adjacent green space. Both are located in the Village of South Nyack near the proposed bridge landing (see **Figures 7-2** and **7-3**). Construction of the new South Broadway Bridge over Interstate 87/287 would require a temporary, 3-year easement for 0.03 acres (3.7 percent) of Elizabeth Place Park. The portion of the park that would be affected by this temporary easement is a vegetated sloped area along the park's western edge adjacent to the South Broadway and Interstate 87/287 rights-of-way. The existing steep slope limits use of this area by park patrons. Upon completion of construction, the 0.03 acres would be returned to parkland. In addition, this area would be regraded and flattened such that it would better serve for recreational use. Therefore, the temporary occupancy of the park would not be an adverse impact. An evaluation of potential impacts to Elizabeth Place Park pursuant to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act is provided in Chapter 23, "Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation."

The Replacement Bridge Alternative would result in a 0.04-acre temporary easement (during construction) and a 0.01-acre partial acquisition (permanent) of the 0.05-acre green space located southeast of Elizabeth Place Park. This green space does not include any active recreation facilities (e.g., trails or play equipment). The temporary easement and partial acquisition would preclude public use of this green space during construction, but 0.04 acres of this property would be returned to green space following construction. The 0.01 acres would be permanently incorporated into the right-of-way of the new South Broadway Bridge. Since the partial acquisition of this small area (0.01 acres) of green space would avoid adverse traffic and economic impacts, and the partial loss of this green space would be fully compensated by the construction of an approximately 4-acre shared-use path over the replacement bridge, its permanent incorporation into the project is not considered an adverse impact. In addition, since this green space is not mapped as parkland and is not considered a resource of national, state, or local significance, Section 4(f) does not apply to this property.

The Replacement Bridge Alternative would require that the existing Interstate 87/287 right-of-way be expanded to the north (see **Figure 7-4**) by a permanent aerial easement of 0.01 acres above the proposed RiverWalk. This proposed easement would still allow RiverWalk to pass beneath the replacement bridge. Therefore, the Replacement Bridge Alternative would not adversely impact RiverWalk.

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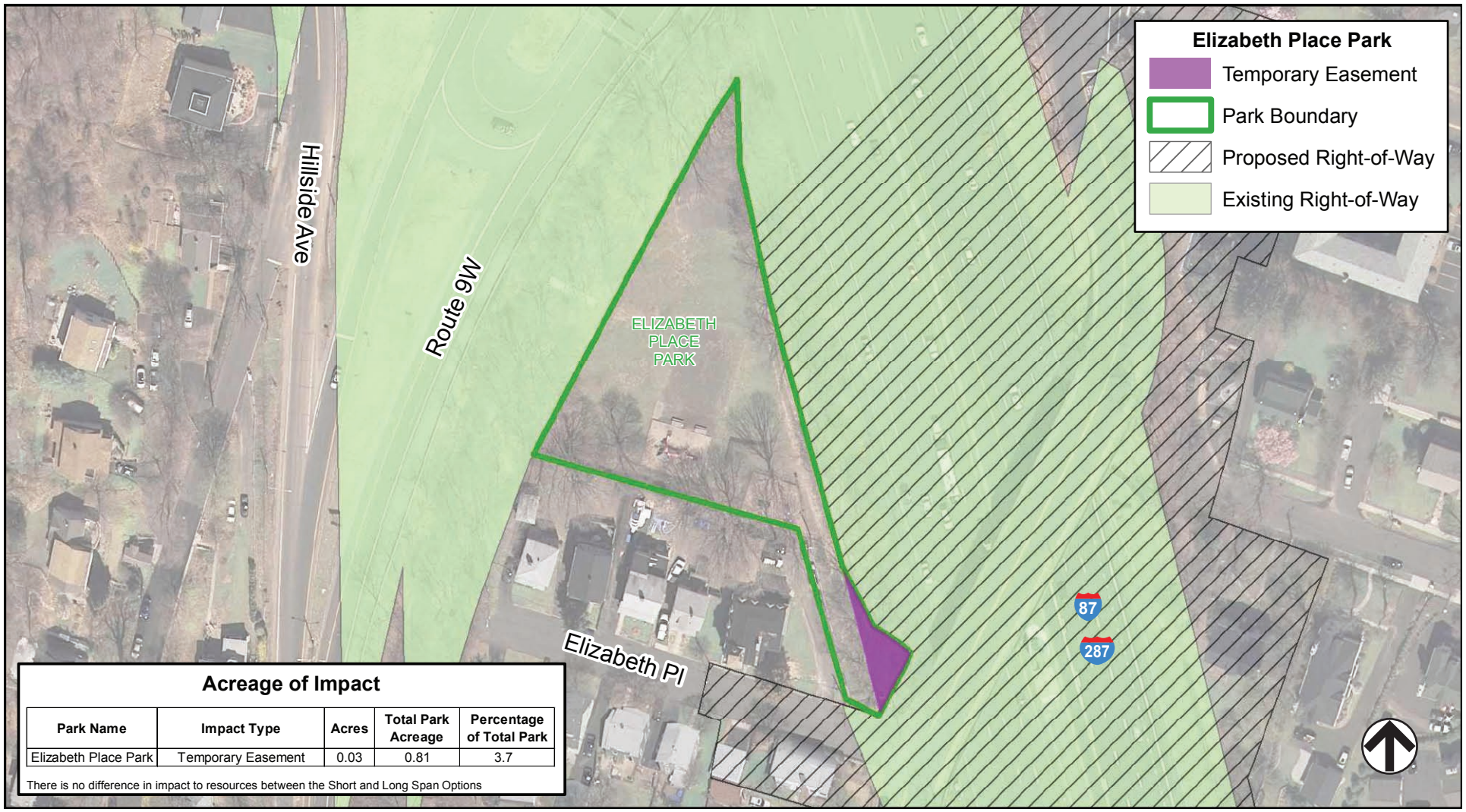

Acreage of Impact

Park Name	Impact Type	Acres	Total Park Acreage	Percentage of Total Park
Elizabeth Place Park	Temporary Easement	0.03	0.81	3.7

There is no difference in impact to resources between the Short and Long Span Options

Figure 7-2
Elizabeth Place Park

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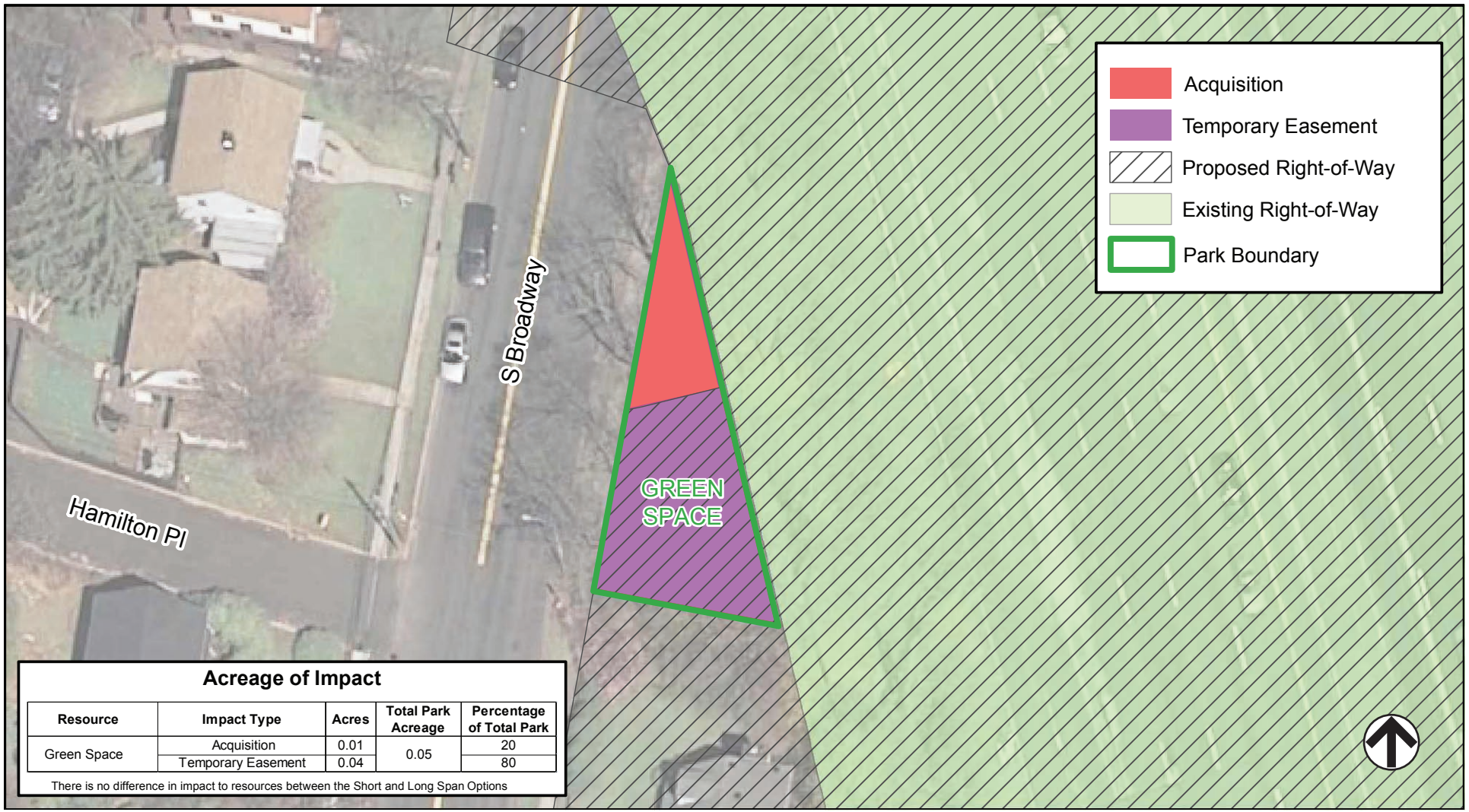

Acreage of Impact

Resource	Impact Type	Acres	Total Park Acreage	Percentage of Total Park
Green Space	Acquisition	0.01	0.05	20
	Temporary Easement	0.04		80

There is no difference in impact to resources between the Short and Long Span Options

Figure 7-3
Green Space

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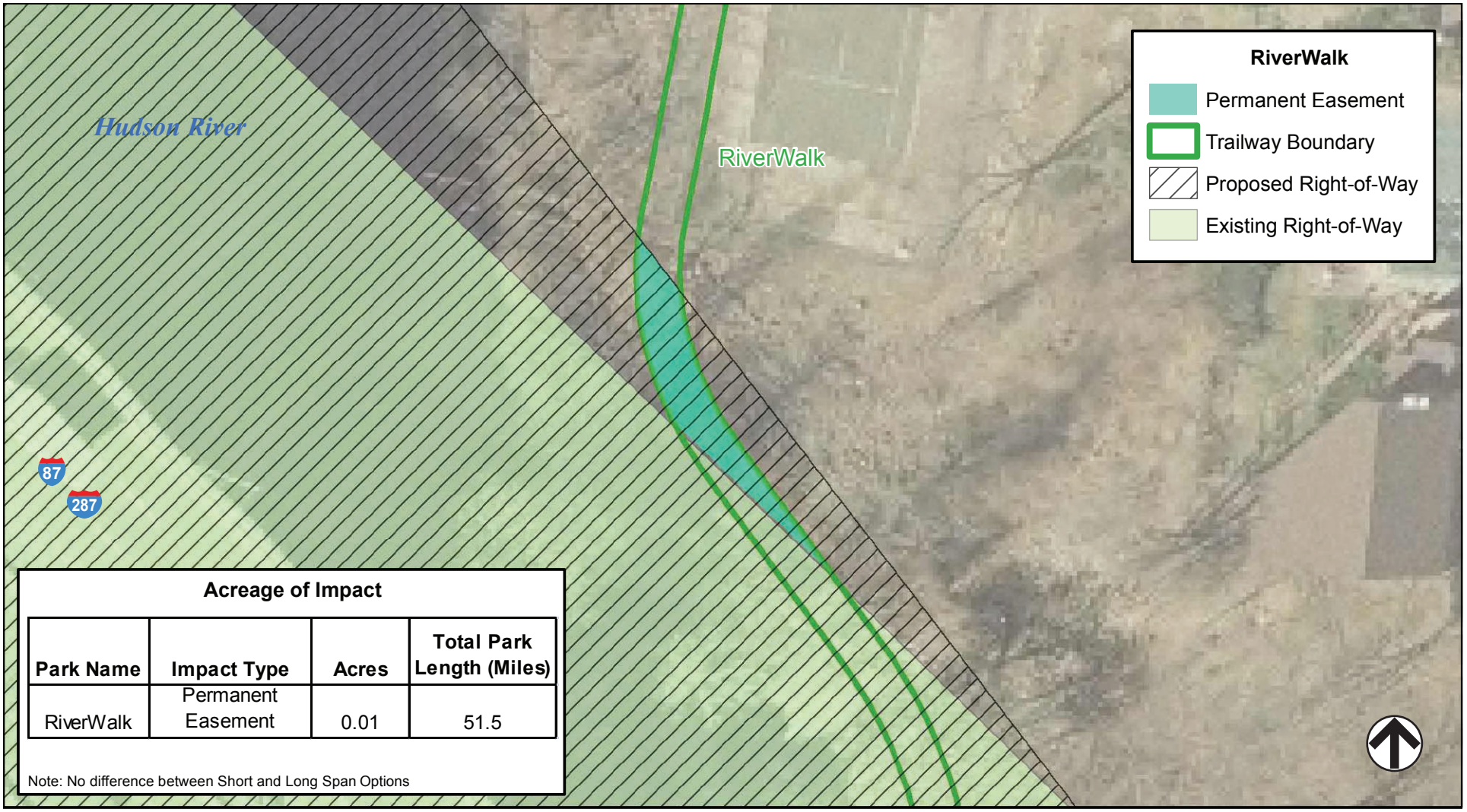

Acreage of Impact

Park Name	Impact Type	Acres	Total Park Length (Miles)
RiverWalk	Permanent Easement	0.01	51.5

Note: No difference between Short and Long Span Options

0 20 50 FEET

SCALE

Figure 7-4
RiverWalk

The Replacement Bridge Alternative would maintain the navigable channel of the Hudson River at the Tappan Zee crossing and would not adversely impact the Hudson River Greenway Water Trail and recreational boating.

7-6 MITIGATION

The Replacement Bridge Alternative would not result in adverse impacts to parklands and recreational resources. Therefore, mitigation is not required.