



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Terry Martino
FROM: Jim Connolly
DATE: February 2, 2012
SUBJECT: Highlights of Planning Division Activities for January 2012

REGIONAL PLANNING

Agency Input into State Byway Project Application Review

At the request of DOT, Agency staff were requested to review and score project applications submitted for funding under the FY2012 National Scenic Byway Program. Fifteen applications have been received for a total request of \$5,789,920 in Byways funding. Projects were ranked based on a number of criteria including whether the project provided improved facilities for the traveling public, development of interpretive materials, enhanced marketing, improved recreational opportunities, conservation of natural or historic resources or provided an overall contribution to the State' Scenic Byway Program. Upon completion of the scoring process, DOT will be submitted the project applications to the Federal Highway Administration. Agency Executive Director is a member of the NYS Scenic Byways Advisory Board which provides DOT with input on the scoring and ranking of projects.

Adirondack Association of Towns & Villages (AATV) Annual Meeting

Agency Planning staff attended the December 5th meeting of AATV along with Agency Chairwoman Ulrich. Several topics were presented during the course of the meeting. Kara Page from the Wild Center recapped the Wild Center Exchange Project with Finland. Dave Mason outlined the process for the Mapping the Future of the Adirondack Park project which is a conceptualizing exercise to explore options for the future of the Adirondacks. Matt Turcotte from North Shore Solutions showcased the Clarkson University Program for

Entrepreneurship. Matt is a college sophomore who owns his own business which Clarkson helps sponsor through tuition assistance, office space and mentoring in exchange for a ten percent share in the business. Randy Douglas presented an update on the North County Regional Economic Development Council. Mr. Douglas highlighted the work of the NCEDC and the steps the council went through to give the North Country a strong application for funding. The meeting concluded with a discussion of the Adirondack Partnership headed by Bill Farber and the possible uses for the economic development funding recently awarded by the state.

**Meeting of Lake Champlain Heritage Area Partnership
Advisory Committee**

Agency Planning staff attended a meeting of the Lake Champlain Heritage Area Advisory Committee held in Champlain, NY. The advisory committee is a NY/VT advisory group which has been established to provide recommendations to the Lake Champlain Basin Program on budgeting and implementation of a management plan for the Lake Champlain National Heritage Area. The Heritage Area Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011/12 budget, through National Park Service appropriations, is expected to be between \$150,000 and \$300,000 dependant upon ongoing Congressional budget discussions. The Advisory Committee has identified exhibit development, sponsoring an international conference and local grant programs as their highest priorities. Next year is the bicentennial of the War of 1812 and the program will support numerous activities related to bicentennial events including a tour of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's canal schooner to Lake Champlain, Erie Canal, the Great Lakes, Richelieu River and the Ottawa River to commemorate War of 1812 historic sites and battlefields in northern New York and Canada.

MAP AMENDMENTS

Meeting with Town of Crown Point

On December 8, Agency staff attended a meeting of the Crown Point Town Board where the Board was considering an application to the Agency for an amendment to the official Adirondack Park Land Use & Development Plan map. Agency staff were invited to the meeting by Bethany Kosmider, the outgoing Town Supervisor, to answer questions about the Agency's map amendment process. Agency staff has worked

with the Supervisor of Crown Point over several month to identify areas for Hamlet expansion which are served by existing public water and sewer. The Board passed a resolution in favor of the amendments at the meeting. Once the application is formally submitted to the Agency, staff will continue to work closely with the Town to develop a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for public review. The Town's proposed map amendments would expand Hamlet classification by approximately 136 acres. The Agency has minimal jurisdiction in formally designated Hamlet areas within the Park. Prior to formal Agency review of the Hamlet expansion request, an EIS will need to address concerns related to the fact that the Town of Crown Point does not have local zoning in place and their sewer ordinance does not specifically require hook-ups to the community wastewater treatment plant for new development.

STATE LAND ACTIVITIES

Meeting with DEC on Nature Conservancy Land Classification

Agency Planning staff met with DEC's Forest Preserve Coordinator to visit the Gooley Tract, a portion of land in the Town of Newcomb under consideration for acquisition from the Nature Conservancy for addition to the State Forest Preserve. This tract provides potential opportunities for backcountry canoe & kayaking experiences. Both APA and DEC staff will be working closely with the Nature Conservancy to evaluate the potential for future public use and access to these and other tracts of land which may be part of future acquisition by the State.

Whiteface Mt. Unit Management Plan

The Agency has recently transmitted a draft copy of an amendment to the Whiteface Mt. Unit Management Plan prepared by the Olympic Regional Development Council. DEC and APA will be collaborating on its review which will need to be considered by the Agency Board for a determination on compliance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. The amendment proposes the widening of two ski trails, construction of an emergency access & maintenance road, reuse of an old lodge as a warming station, installation of emergency services communications equipment on Little Whiteface Mt. and adjustments to water withdrawal from the West Branch of the AuSable River for snowmaking. Agency staff will provide review comments to DEC staff for possible incorporation into the draft. It is expected that

the UMP amendment will be released for public review later this year.

Meeting with DEC, the Nature Conservancy and Reserve America on Campsite Reservation Program

Planning Division staff met with Mike Carr, Executive Director of the Adirondack Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, Rob Davies DEC Lands and Forests Division Director and representatives of Reserve America/Active Outdoors, the State contractor for campground reservations. The purpose of the meeting was to explore options for reserving Forest Preserve campsites which are not located in intensive use campgrounds. Reserve America already reserves some sites in Wild Forest areas which are part of an "administrative camping area", associated with a nearby campground. The Nature Conservancy was involved in the meeting as part of discussions between them and the State for acquisition of former Finch-Pruyn lands including the Essex Chain of Lakes. DEC and APA staff are currently assessing State Land classification options and the potential for public use and camping opportunities for this potential acquisition.

Conference Call with DEC on Status of Unit Management Plans

On Monday, 1/23, Planning Division staff participated in a conference call with DEC Unit Management planners to discuss the status of Forest Preserve unit plans which are under development. Thirty-three Wilderness and Wild Forest plans have been completed for the Adirondack Park. Twenty-one plans are either under development or need to be completed. Within the next few months, DEC staff is anticipating that several plans will be released for public review or will be ready for an Agency determination of compliance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. These include plans for the Ferris Lake, Lake George, Wilcox Lake, and Taylor Pond Wild Forest units, Lake Champlain Islands Complex and Hoffman Notch Wilderness. Several other plans are still being drafted by DEC staff and are not ready for public review. It is also expected that unit plans for the St. Regis Mountain and Hurricane Mt. Fire Tower Historic Areas will be completed in the near future.

Other State Land Activities

State Land staff prepared a summary of State Land events for the Agency's 2012 Annual report.

State Land staff reviewed one JIF for a replacement Pump House at Nick's Lake Campground.

State Land staff reviewed a second JIF, a 1200 sq. ft. snowmobile bridge in Wilmington WF. This bridge would require a wetlands permit. Staff will work with DEC to determine if an alternative is available.

State Land staff reviewed a proposed trail project included in the Hoffman Notch Wilderness UMP. The proposed trail improvement included the creation of a scenic vista through limb cutting. Staff determined that the creation of this vista would involve substantial cutting and would not be compliant with draft policy established between the Agency and the Department.

State Land staff worked with DEC in preparing a UMP amendment for Cranberry Lake Wild Forest.

State Land staff attended a meeting in Wanakena to discuss potential mountain bike trail opportunities in Cranberry Lake WF and adjacent easement lands.

State Land staff reviewed a permit for application of herbicides to treat Eurasian Milfoil on Eagle Lake. The permit conditions will require sequestering curtains to prevent the accidental destruction of non-targeted species, including *Bidens beckii*, a threatened species and of any aquatic species on Forest Preserve lands.

State Land staff reviewed historical files on Scenic Vista's. Staff also spoke with Elysa Smigielski, a SUNY ESF Graduate student, interested in scenic vista mapping within the Park.

State Land staff provided contact information to Mike (W.) at LaBerge Group regarding a Transportation conference being held in Lake Placid this May. They are interested in hosting a field trip cycling from Lake Placid to the Flume in Wilmington to discuss recreational issues associated with State Highways. APA will be asked to participate.

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On Jan. 10, staff conducted field work in Wilcox Lake Wild Forest with regional DEC staff as part of the review of a new draft UMP being prepared by the Department for that area.

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