



**M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Terry Martino  
**FROM:** Jim Connolly  
**DATE:** August 3, 2012  
**SUBJECT:** Highlights of Planning Division Activities for July 2012

**REGIONAL & PARKWIDE PLANNING**

**Coordination with Regulatory Program on Essex County Communications System and Whiteface Mountain UMP Amendment**

Following Agency staff participation in a July 6 meeting with ORDA and DEC staff to discuss the draft UMP, Agency staff received information from ORDA regarding potential remediation proposals for the Bicknell Thrush. ORDA staff are preparing revisions to the proposed 2012 amendment to the 2004 Whiteface Mountain UMP which will include the following components: Lookout Mountain Emergency Access and Maintenance Road proposed for access to Hoyt's High Trail; Modifications to Burton's and Lower Thruway Ski Trails; Reuse of Porcupine Lodge; Revisions to Cooperative Agreement for Snowmaking Water Withdrawal; and Replacement of the Little Whiteface Ski Patrol Building and installation of Essex County Emergency Communications and NYSP Communications Infrastructure. The Little Whiteface Ski Patrol Building will also require an 814 Order from the Agency relating to it being one component of the 16-site Essex County Emergency Communications System that will be presented to the Agency (presently the complete application to the Agency is pending) as a proposal from the NY State Police, Essex County and NYS Electric and Gas Company.

**Adirondack Partnership Recreational Plan Work Group**

On July 13 Agency staff participated in a meeting of the Adirondack Partnership Recreational Plan Work Group. The work group is preparing a recreational management plan for the Adirondack Park and recently submitted a proposal to

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enhance coordination between public and private websites which contain recreation information for the Park. The Agency provided a letter of support for the project application.

**APA/DEC Policy Coordination Work Group**

On July 19, APA and DEC staff participated in a conference call to coordinate policy issues between the two agencies. Agenda items included the status of internal reports on DEC/APA efficiency initiative, an update on the status of DEC's draft ATV policy for State lands, resolving issues related to primitive camping opportunities on Valcour Island on Lake Champlain, and a discussion of the status of unit management plans.

**Field Evaluation of Former Finch Pruyn Lands for Future Classification**

On July 23, APA and DEC staff met in the field to discuss potential public access points in the vicinity of the Outer Gooley Club in the Town of Minerva. The property provides access to the Indian River and Hudson River in the vicinity upstream from the Hudson River Gorge, a major wilderness whitewater rafting opportunity along a 16-mile stretch of the Indian & Hudson Rivers created from daily water releases from Lake Abanakee.

**Meeting with DEC Staff to Discuss Revisions to the North Country Scenic Trail Proposal**

On July 30 APA and DEC staff met to discuss planning efforts for the North Country Scenic Trail (NCST), a national trail system which stretches from North Dakota, where it connects to the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail, to Lake Champlain at Crown Point. The NCST also will have a potential connection to the Appalachian Trail in Vermont's Green Mountains at some point in the future. A draft plan was originally released by DEC for public review in November, 2007. DEC and APA staff are currently collaborating on trail relocations & alternatives in the Moose River Plains Wild Forest, West Canada Lake Wilderness & Vanderwhacker Wild Forest. Although a high degree of use is expected within the Adirondack Park portion of the NCST, it will take several years to create new trails segments and arrange property owner agreements to connect portions of the trail through private lands.

**Conference Call with NYS Department of State on Inter-agency Coordination**

On July 31, Executive Director Terry Martino and Deputy Director Jim Connolly participated in a conference call with NYS Dept of State Training Program Director Chris Eastman to discuss increased coordination between APA and DOS staff on a variety of programs. APA and DOS staff will work to increase training for local officials in a variety of programs provided by DOS training staff, including training on consolidation of government services and other training for local town boards and zoning boards. Staff will be working on developing an approach integrating technical assistance for local government provided by APA and DOS staff in conjunction with inter-agency coordination efforts currently underway through the Regional Economic Development Councils.

**Meeting on Demographic Information and Economic Development Data for the Adirondack Park**

On August 1, APA staff (Connolly/Kelleher/Barge) met with staff from NYS Dept of Economic Development, NYS Department of Labor and Cornell's Program on Applied Demographics to discuss how to best gather, analyze and present census and other data sources for the Park. The meeting was held at the request of APA Executive Director Terry Martino and Empire State Development Deputy Commissioner Jen McCormick as a follow-up to improve inter-agency collaboration and efficiencies. The intent of this effort will be to work on a mechanism to create annual reports on demographic and economic trends for Parkwide, County & Town level data with the expectation that it will help to better inform policy initiatives, public understanding of the Park's economy and the work of the three Regional Economic Development Councils which cover portions of the Adirondack Park. The work group agreed to explore the possibility of exploring the potential for requesting the US Census Bureau create census block areas consistent with Park boundaries. Representatives of Cornell's Applied Demographics Program agreed to evaluate and report on population and other demographic data from the 2010 and previous census. The Department of Labor, which was represented at the meeting by Deputy Director Bohdan Wynnyk will provide information on labor force and other economic development trends for the Park. The group will meet in September to discuss parameter for data collection in order to insure

consistency and reliability of any information which is generated.

#### **STATE LAND & UMP REVIEW ACTIVITIES**

State Land staff continues reviewing the Team Draft Grasse River Wild Forest UMP and submitted informal comments to DEC.

State Land staff determined that relocating the Gulf Brook lean-to in the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness approximately 600 feet away from its current location would not require a UMP amendment.

State Land and RASS staff met with DEC at the West Lake Boat Launch to delineate wetlands and discuss parking configuration and design limitations for the UMP. This UMP is being written at the same time that the Ferris Lake Wild Forest UMP is being written and requires a reclassification action.

State Land staff participated in a Scenic Byways conference call regarding proposed alternatives and settlement for a billboard violation in the Buffalo area.

State land staff has been working with DEC and DOT to advance the Wilmington Route 86 Scenic Byways project.

State land staff assisted Regulatory staff with a visual analysis for permit application in Keene Valley and the High peaks Wilderness.

State Land staff joined Regulatory, DEC, and DOT staff for an annual meeting with National Grid to identify and discuss upcoming utility projects.

State land staff attended the Common Ground Alliance meeting in Long Lake.

State Land staff continued reviewing campsite locations and SLMP compliance issues for Ferris Lake Wild Forest UMP. State Land staff met with DEC to discuss potential problems and solutions to non compliant campsites.

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State Land staff reviewed JIF 2012-0375, rip rap installation by Lachute Hydro, Town of Ticonderoga, on NYS leased land.

State land staff worked with RASS staff and DEC staff to determine issues involved with using Benthic Mats for Eurasian Milfoil control in the Deer River Flow on State Lands.

On July 9, State Land staff consulted by phone with Regional and Central Office DEC staff concerning the potential for glade skiing as a recreational activity on Forest Preserve lands in the vicinity of Lyon Mountain in the Chazy Highlands Wild Forest.

On July 10, State Land staff met with Central Office and Regional DEC staff in Warrensburg concerning snowmobile trail and bridge issues to be addressed by the draft UMP for the Wilcox Lake Wild Forest.

On July 10, APA staff met with staff from DEC, Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA) and Atmospheric Science Research Center (ASRC) at Whiteface Mountain to review status of DEC's emergency communications equipment. DEC's generator failed several months ago and they have temporarily installed a backup generator in the public parking area on Veteran's Memorial Highway. Parking is limited at this site and ORDA staff has requested that any permanent generator be installed to minimize impact on the parking area. The generator is needed to insure that emergency communications equipment on the mountain is operable at all times & there are numerous winter outages of electric service to the summit. Staff also inspected the current communication tower located in the ASRC weather station building at the summit. The tower needs additional structural support since it is currently attached to the building near the roof with only limited structural support. Temporary measures will be taken to insure stability of the tower. It is expected that a new monopole tower will be installed along the exterior face of the ASRC building once engineering designs are developed.

On July 17 and 18, APA and DEC staff conducted public hearings on a unit management plan and reclassification of State lands from Wilderness to Intensive Use for the Second Pond Boat Launch site, which is located between Saranac

Lake and Tupper Lake. The boat launch provides primary access for the public to campsites on Lower and Middle Saranac Lake. The public comment period ended on July 31, and a final unit management plan and classification proposal will be provided to the Agency Board to determine conformance of the proposal with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

On July 24, APA & DEC staff met on-site at the Camp Santanoni Historic Area in the Town of Newcomb to discuss updates and amendments to a unit management plan for the area with representatives of Adirondack Architectural Heritage organization. Several revisions to the current plan are under development including improving access for people with disabilities, improvements to visitor information and interpretive programs and possible reconstruction of an historic barn in the farm complex area of the site. It is expected that DEC staff will be completing a draft amendment of the unit management plan for public release later this year.

On July 27, State Land staff joined Central Office and Regional DEC staff near Inlet in the Moose River Plains Wild Forest for a site visit concerning a section of the proposed Community Connector snowmobile trail between Inlet and Raquette Lake.

State Land staff assessed field opportunities for persons with disabilities in the High Peaks Wilderness.

#### **CARTOGRAPHY AND INFORMATION ANALYSIS**

GIS Agency Program Administration - Staff directed annual software maintenance renewal for all Esri GIS software which supports the majority of Agency GIS functions. Staff looked for cost savings. Staff eliminated one software license for a mobile GPS unit no longer in service.

GIS Consultation - Staff advised Agency State Land staff how to integrate Internet published Web Mapping Services (WMS) online resources into GIS projects. This enables staff to quickly incorporate authoritative, current spatial data into their map and analysis projects.

GIS Consultation - Staff provided technical assistance to Regulatory Programs staff with coordinating DEC and APA permit information.

GIS Consultation - Staff advised Agency RASS staff in best practices to determine and assign an average elevation above sea level for all wetlands in a given study area.

GIS Agency Program Administration - Staff provided information about the Agency's use of state orthoimagery to staff from the NYS DHSES Office of Cyber Security who administers the annual program to acquire new aerial imagery for the state.

GIS Hardware/Software Management - Staff responded to a request from Agency JIF and Regulatory Program staff to incorporate a new tool in the mapping Lookup System to locate and determine any X,Y coordinate values. Staff receives referrals from other state agencies providing only a coordinate to locate a project site. Staff researched program tools and incorporated new coordinate mapping functions into the Agency Lookup System.

GIS Agency Program Administration - Staff evaluated new state proposals to classify primitive roads and trails in state-wide transportation mapping. Staff participated in a state subcommittee tasked to develop a new coding scheme to indicate "four wheel drive" roads, seasonal roads and gated roads.

GIS Consultation - Staff provided information about street address data within the park to Jennifer McCormick, Agency Designee, ESD.

GIS Consultation - Staff reviewed the Agency Trends Analysis report for data collection proposals covering park human demographics and economy.

GIS Consultation - Staff reviewed "Alternative Approaches and Consequences to Delineations of Adirondack Tracts - A Preliminary Report" by Joe Francis and Sutee Anantsuksomsri, Program on Applied Demographics, Cornell University. This report was prepared in advance of a meeting between APA, ESD, DOL, and Cornell staff looking at park economic and demographic statistics and trends.

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GIS Agency Program Administration & Hardware/Software Management - Staff installed the new release of all Esri GIS software on the Agency GIS server. The process included evaluating system requirements, acquiring license key codes, old software removal, software installation, configuration, and testing. Updated GIS software included ArcGIS Advanced Desktop and Extensions; ArcServer Enterprise; ArcSDE for spatial database connection to Microsoft SQL Server. These systems support all Agency GIS, Lookup System, and MAD operations.

GIS Data Management - Staff performed ministerial edits to the APLUDP/SLMP GIS data to reflect best available base map information.

GIS Consultation - Staff participated as a member of the program planning committee for the annual NYS GeoSpatial Summit to be held this October. Conference calls are held each Tuesday morning for the statewide committee.

GIS Map Production - Staff provided maps to Regulatory Program/RASS staff to assist in the review of a town road project in the Town of Belmont.

GIS Map Production - Staff is working on a map requested by the Town of Essex to use during their land use ordinance and rezoning hearing.

GIS Training - Staff attended two training webinars on the PYTHON programming language for GIS. Staff also reviewed training information regarding databases.

Map Amendments - Staff met to discuss potential Hamlet expansion plan unitizing a Map Amendment conditional on the installation of public sewer.

LUA Boundary/Blue Line Inquiry - Staff answered six inquiries about the location of the Park boundary or land use area boundaries.

LUA Boundary/Blue Line Inquiry - Staff researched information about State agency jurisdiction of certain lands underwater

State Land Re/Classification - Staff assisted State Land staff with proposed reclassification of the lands around the Second Pond Boat Launch

State Land Re/Classification - Staff provided assistance to DEC staff regarding classification boundaries around Silver Lake Wilderness.

State Land Re/Classification - Staff provided assistance to State Land staff regarding historic classification information on Valcour Island Primitive Area.

Web Administration - Staff evaluated website visitation statistics for Business/Economy pages as requested by Economic staff for the last 6, 3, and 1 month periods.

Web Content Management - Staff posted content on behalf of Agency Economic Service staff including a comprehensive update to the Business/Economy section of our site.

Web Content Management - Staff edited links to DEC website content.

Web Content Management - Staff removed the EPS1 job vacancy posting.

Administrative Tasks - Staff prepared monthly reports.

July GIS/Web Task Summary:

Task	Count
GIS Agency Program Administration	4
GIS Consultation	7
GIS Hardware/Software Management	3
GIS Map Production	3
GIS Data Management	1
GIS Training	2
LUA Boundary/Blue Line Inquiry	6
Map Amendments	1
State Land Classification/Reclass	3
Web Administration	1
Web Content Management	3
Administrative Tasks	1