

2015 Planning Division

State Lands

State land staff work with DEC staff to prepare and review individual unit management plans (UMPs) consistent with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP); provide guidance and interpretation regarding the APSLMP to DEC staff and the Agency's Board; consult with DEC to develop long-range planning for State lands; review proposed DEC State land projects to ensure their conformance with the APSLMP; and develop staff proposals for the classification and reclassification of State lands in the Park, also in consultation with DEC.

Unit Management Plans

Following a thorough, extended process of reviewing DEC's first UMP for the complex of State lands featuring the Essex Chain Lakes, Pine Lake, and the grounds of the old Outer Gooley Club at the confluence of the Hudson and Indian Rivers, the Agency determined the Essex Chain Lakes Complex UMP to be consistent with provisions of the APSLMP. The Agency also determined that the Alger Island Intensive Use Area and Fourth Lake Day Use Area UMP are compliant with the APSLMP. This is the first of many Campground UMPs the Agency expects to receive over the upcoming years.

UMP amendments were also reviewed by State land staff and approved by the Agency Board. These were amendments to the Whiteface Mountain Ski Area, Pepperbox Wilderness Area, Jessup River Wild Forest Area, Meacham Lake Intensive Use Area, and the Community Connector Trail which is an amendment to three units:

Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest Area, Lake Harris Public Campground Intensive Use Area and Camp Santanoni Historic Area.

State land staff continued to consult extensively with DEC staff in the Department's ongoing development of UMPs and amendments to UMPs for: Saranac Lakes, Wilcox Lake, Black River, Grasse River, Moose River Plains and Wilmington Wild Forest Areas; Lake Champlain Islands Complex; Limekiln Lake, Caroga Lake, Eighth Lake and Lake Durant Public Campgrounds; Crown Point Historic Area; and the Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor.

Revisions to the APSLMP

Throughout the year, staff continued work on drafting proposed amendments to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. Draft revisions submitted to the Agency Board in December as a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS), in preparation for public hearings held in January, 2016, were grouped into those considered ministerial changes, minor changes, additional content and major changes to basic guidelines. Those considered major changes to basic guidelines represent fulfillment of a commitment made by the Agency Board in 2013, during classification of those lands now comprising the Essex Chain Lakes and Pine Lake Primitive Areas. Considered in the process were over 1,000 public comments gathered during listening sessions held in late 2014 and ongoing consultations with staff of the DEC.

Regulatory Review

Agency staff consulted with Regulatory Program and RASS staff on wetland permitting and the review of Recreational Management Plans (RMPs). Three General Permits and one full Permit for wetlands were issued to the Department. Two RMPs were reviewed by State land staff: Sacandaga West Recreation Management Plan, which encompasses easement properties owned by Upper Hudson Woodlands ATP in Fulton County and the Grasse River Draft Recreation Management Plan. The Grasse River plan encompasses properties owned by Lyme Timber Company in St. Lawrence County.

State Land Planning

State land staff reviewed thirty-three projects to determine if proposed projects were compliant with the APSLMP or needed a wetland permit.

Various snowmobile trail construction and maintenance projects were reviewed by State land staff and undertaken by DEC during the year, including – most importantly – community connector snowmobile trails between Speculator and Indian Lake, Long Lake and Newcomb, and Newcomb and Minerva. Bog-bridging and stringer-bridge construction projects were reviewed and/or completed along foot trails in wilderness areas such as the Hudson Gorge, Pigeon Lake, William C. Whitney and Ha-De-Ron-Dah wildernesses. Several projects to replace dilapidated lean-tos located too close to the water's edge for APSLMP compliance were approved at lakes across the Adirondacks. Other notable DEC projects reviewed include development of accessible, Forest Preserve structures and improvements designed for people with disabilities, as well as establishment of boat wash stations at a number of critical boat launch sites to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Staff completed a multi-year project with DEC staff drafting a set of “Best Management Practices for Primitive Tent Sites in the Adirondack Forest Preserve,” which were presented to the Agency’s Board for a determination of compliance with the APSLMP. Staff also continued to conduct field work and meetings with DEC staff and stakeholders to evaluate the potential for development of new management of back-country ski trails in the Forest Preserve compliant with the APSLMP.

Finally, as the Great South Woods Project gained momentum in 2015 and successfully engaged stakeholders throughout the southern half of the Adirondack Park, State land staff of the Agency remained fully involved with DEC and SUNY College of ESF staff in facilitating and directing this first-of-its-kind, Park-wide recreational planning effort. Two productive rounds of public meetings were held in villages stretching from North Creek to Speculator and Old Forge, and the drafting of a proposed implementation “strategy” is underway and anticipated for review by DEC and APA in early 2016.

Historic Resource Reviews

Staff completed required historic resource reviews for various projects in the Towns of Black Brook, Dannemora, Duane, Elizabethtown, Ellenburg, Essex, Fine, Fort Ann, Franklin, Greenfield, Keene, Lake Luzerne, Long Lake, Saranac, Schroon, and Wilmington. In addition, staff completed historic resource review for the Park-wide Mesonet weather station network installation and provided instruction to Regulatory staff regarding the new Historic Preservation online tool provided by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

2015 State Land Tasks Summary:

Task	Year to Date
APSLMP Consultations	144
APSLMP Revision	34
Park Policy and Planning	67
Administration	34
Historic Preservation Act Review	21

Park Policy and Planning

Map Amendments

The Agency approved a map amendment that was requested by a landowner in the Town of Moriah. This map amendment reclassified approximately 20 acres near the Hamlet of Port Henry from Resource Management to Moderate Intensity Use. The Agency also approved a map amendment in the Town of Wilmington that reclassified approximately 24 acres near the entrance to the Whiteface Ski Area from Low Intensity Use to Moderate Intensity Use. The Town saw the reclassification as a step toward its goal of expanding commercial, tourism and hospitality uses near the ski area. The amendment allows for an increase in density in this area which may provide the impetus to create a decentralized wastewater treatment system to serve this area and nearby development. The Agency also reviewed a map amendment request by a private landowner in the Town of Westport which would expand the Hamlet of Westport. The applicant requested that an approximately 12 acre parcel be reclassified from Resource Management to Hamlet, contingent upon expanding public sewer service to the area. The Agency completed its review and passed a resolution in support of amending the map when public sewer service is expanded to the area.

Geographic Information Analysis

Geographic information technology provides critical support behind the scenes for many programs within the Agency. The mapping “Lookup System” continued to provide natural, cultural, and jurisdictional information on a daily basis to every staff member at their desktop. Support staff continued to use “EditApA” app to map all Agency business transactions at the beginning of our review workflow. A new photogrammetry

workstation was set up by Planning and ITS to assist RASS staff mapping wetlands from high accuracy stereo photo images. This low-cost, advanced system is exemplary to other state agencies. Significant map data accuracy improvements were made to the state and private land classification map administered by the Agency. New parcel data from the 12 counties formed the base map for these improvements. The Agency continued to maintain and add to its online public GIS applications. The updated land classification online map, published in May, reached 29,000 views in 2015. A few examples of GIS analysis done by staff include work on Wild Forest roads, primitive campsites, backcountry skiing, economic data for Local Government Day, terrestrial habitats, and telecommunications towers.

Agency Website

For the first time since 2003, the Agency website had a complete redesign. New state wide branding initiatives prompted updates to the Agency’s logo, colors and page layouts. The forms page also received an update and now delivers the Agency’s forms in more intuitive categories with specific links to help documents.

2015 GIS/Web Tasks Summary:

Task	Year to Date
GIS Agency Program Administration	101
GIS Map Production	77
LUA Boundary/Blue Line Inquiry	3,148
Map Amendments Review	16
State Land Classification/Reclassification Review	2
Web Administration/Content Management	116
Administrative Tasks	28

Local Government Services Program

The Local Government Services Program administers Sections 807 and 808 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act and its implementing regulations. Two program staff provide oversight of the eighteen Agency-approved local land use programs and review approximately 100 variance referrals and 30-50 zoning amendments annually from the participating program municipalities. Additionally, staff respond to numerous informational requests from local officials within the Park. The workload is driven by strict statutory deadlines for responses to variance referrals and the need to provide timely responses to inquiries from elected and appointed officials.

In 2015, long-time LGS head, Brian Grisi retired (April) and was replaced by the promotion of LGS staffer Robyn Burgess (May). In addition, LGS added new staff member Kate-Lyn Knight to the team (August).

Also of note in 2015 was the vote for dissolution in the Village of Port Henry on October 27, 2015. The Village will now undergo the dissolution process with government functions becoming the sole responsibility of the Town of Moriah. Following the dissolution, the Adirondack Park will then consist of 101 Towns (92) and Villages (9). This year also marked an election cycle that saw 78 Town Supervisor elections. Twenty-one of these elections resulted in new supervisors who will start their first terms in 2016.

A summary of Local Government Services accomplishments and reportable items in 2015 is provided in the table below. The information is compiled from LGS Committee monthly reports. The data highlights the number of Adirondack communities and officials that staff consulted with and provided assistance to during the course of 2015. The table also includes the number of intra-Agency consultations with Agency staff and inter-Agency coordination and planning initiatives with other state agencies and regional and state organizations.

Local Government Services Summary of Program Accomplishments and Reportable Items	2015 Totals
Land use regulations consulted/reviewed	26
ALLUP amendments approved	3
ALLUP variances reviewed/reversed	70/2
Comprehensive Plans reviewed	3
Meetings with town officials	26
Responded to land use planning inquiries	128
Training & Workshops provided	4
Intra-Agency local planning assistance	30
Coordination with other regional organizations and agencies	32
Presentations to the Agency Board	4
<i>“ALLUP” denotes “APA-approved local land use program”</i>	

The reportable items in the table above include the following activities in each category:

- In-Park towns and villages consulted - Of 102 Adirondack Park towns and villages, staff met with or had interactions with 60 of those communities. In addition in 2015 the Agency sent out a mailing to all 102 municipalities with information about various Agency services along with contact information that can be shared with their

constituents. Pictured below is the front side of business cards that were sent to all 102 towns & villages in the Park to encourage the public to contact the Agency. These cards can now be found in many town offices.



When in doubt seek us out!



- Land use regulations consulted/reviewed - Staff are regularly requested to review and comment on local land use laws. Most of the local laws are from municipalities with ALLUPs where the Agency has a statutory requirement to review. Non-ALLUP communities also request review of their local laws to determine compliance with or to avoid conflicts with APA regulations. Staff try to comply with those requests on a case-by-case basis as time permits. In 2015 staff reviewed a total of 26 land use laws from communities in the Park.
- ALLUP amendments approved - Two repeals and replacements of ALLUP zoning codes were received Agency approval in 2015. The Town of Arietta, which received original approval in 1982, adopted a revised new code in 2015. In addition the Town of Willsboro, which received original approval in 1980, received approval from the Agency for a zoning code rewrite. Agency staff also worked with several other communities on ALLUP amendments which have not yet received Board approval.
- ALLUP variances - Towns with an ALLUP are required to refer all locally approved variances (outside of Hamlet land use areas) to the Agency. The Agency has 30-days for review in which time it may reverse the local determination if it was not based upon the appropriate statutory basis. In 2015 staff reviewed 70 locally granted variances from ALLUPs with two of the local grants reversed by the Agency.
- Comprehensive Plans reviewed - Comprehensive Plans serve as the primary instrument for protecting the public interest and attaining local development objectives, as well as articulating the town's vision of present and future goals for

growth. While the Agency has responsibility to review Comprehensive Plans from ALLUPs, staff also receive requests to review and comment on Comprehensive Plans from other towns in in the Park. The review of community comprehensive plans further supports the Agency's regional land use planning role. In 2015 staff reviewed three Comprehensive Plans.

- Meetings with town officials - Staff regularly meet with elected and appointed officials to discuss Agency and local issues. These meetings occur with individual town representatives or with town boards in public meeting sessions. In 2015 staff conducted 26 meetings with town officials.
- Responding to land use planning inquiries - Local Government Services staff routinely meet with local officials for both formal advisories and informal guidance. In 2015 staff responded to 128 inquiries from local officials.
- Training & Workshops provided - Working cooperatively with other state agencies, Agency staff, and local officials, the local planning staff provides training for municipal officials. The largest outreach program is the Adirondack Park Local Government Day conference in which over 350 people representing 49 Adirondack towns and villages, and 61 other organizations attended the 2015 event. In 2015 staff provided 4 additional training opportunities for municipal officials.
- Intra-Agency local planning assistance - The local government services staff regularly provide assistance to Agency staff working on projects in towns with an ALLUP and other towns where local laws or processes require clarification. In 2015 local planning staff provided assistance to other Agency staff on 30 issues involving local zoning matters.
- Coordination with other agencies and regional organizations - The local government services staff regularly works with other State agencies and regional planning organizations to provide training, coordinate the review of projects, and implement local planning initiatives. In 2015 staff consulted with other State agencies on 32 occasions.
- Agency Board presentations - The local government services staff presented four items to the Agency Board. Staff provided a summary of the Local Government Day Conference; Town of Queensbury ALLUP amendment for Agency approval; Town of Arietta zoning code rewrite for Agency approval; and Town of Willsboro zoning code rewrite for Agency approval.

The attached map provides a graphic display of the towns and village LGS staff were involved with in the past year. This map includes such activities as Local Government Day, town meetings, review of local controls, and the Agency's Hamlet Economic Planning Assistance (HEPA) program.

2015 APA LGS Staff Interactions

Gray shading indicates interaction with APA LGS Staff during 2015. Includes Local Government Day, Annual CEO Conference, Land Use Code Reviews & Town Meetings.

Municipalities outlined in yellow have Agency-approved Local Land Use Programs

