



Adirondack Park Agency

LEILANI CRAFTS ULRICH
Chairwoman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Terry Martino

From: Kathy Regan

Date: March 3, 2016

Re: Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) for the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP) Amendments

In December of 2013, the Adirondack Park Agency approved a State Land Classification Package for the Essex Chain Lakes Tract, Indian River Tract, and OK Slip Falls Tract. In the classification resolution, the Agency committed to consider a revision of the APSLMP guidelines for (1) Primitive Areas to allow for the use of All Terrain Bicycles (ATBs) on appropriate all-season roads able to withstand such use on the Essex Chain Tract and (2) to allow the use of non-natural materials for the construction of a bridge over the Cedar River.

In October 2014 the Agency announced a process to address proposed changes to the APSLMP. Agency staff held four listening post sessions in the fall of 2014. At these sessions the APSLMP amendment process was explained and the public was asked to provide ideas and issues they would like to see addressed in an APSLMP amendment. Written comments were also accepted and encouraged.

Staff gathered these items and held additional meetings in 2015 to discuss areas of common interest. Staff were simultaneously working with the Department to identify potential additional amendments. Staff continued working in consultation with the Department to develop the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS), which included major changes to basic guidelines, additional content, minor changes and ministerial changes to the APSLMP.

The DSEIS was accepted by the Agency on December 10, 2015 and staff held four public hearings in January 2016. The public comment period closed on January 29, 2016. During that time the Agency received 832 comments via mail, fax and email. Staff have reviewed those public comments and have written responses to them (Appendix A, Summary of Public Comment, of the FSEIS).

The FSEIS has been prepared and the attached version shows the changes from the DSEIS. Based on public comment, some of the alternatives for bicycling in Primitive

Areas were modified. Additionally, other proposed minor or ministerial changes have either been modified or removed.

The description and discussion regarding Alternative 2A, 2B, 3A, and 3B were modified to clarify terminology and to address concerns regarding the maintenance of the former all-season roads as they are converted to trails.

The DSEIS did not choose preferred alternatives for either the use of bicycles in Primitive Areas or the use of non-natural materials for bridge construction. The FSEIS has chosen preferred alternatives for each issue.

For bicycling, the primary difference between Alternatives 2 and 3 is location: Alternatives 2A and 2B are limited to the Essex Chain Lakes and Pine Lake Primitive Areas. Alternatives 3A and 3B considered allowing cycling in all Primitive Areas.

The primary difference between Alternatives “A” and “B” is the degree of maintenance of the trails. Alternatives “A” do not allow the use of motor vehicles to maintain the trails following a three-year window which is defined in the FSEIS. Alternatives “B” do allow the use of motor vehicles beyond that defined time, however in a limited capacity.

The preferred Alternative for bicycling is Alternative 2B which allows for bicycling on certain former all-season roads converted to Primitive Recreation Trails in the Essex Chain Lakes and Pine Lake Primitive Area and enables the Department to use motor vehicles and motorized equipment periodically for maintenance, subject to consultation in a work planning process.

Regarding the use of non-natural materials for bridge construction, the primary difference between Alternatives 2 and 3 is location. Alternative 2 limits this possibility for the Cedar River crossing in the Essex Chain Lakes tract. Alternative 3 expands that possibility to include bridges in Wild Forest Areas, following a minimum requirement approach.

The preferred Alternative for the use of non-natural materials is Alternative 3. If this alternative is accepted, a minimum requirement approach process will be developed through a separate public process. Criteria will be developed to determine when the use of non-natural materials will be possible for the construction of bridges in Wild Forest.

A more detailed analysis of these Alternatives can be found in the FSEIS.