



Adirondack Park Agency

SHERMAN CRAIG
Chairman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

DRAFT MINUTES
State Land Committee
November 16, 2017
Agency Meeting
KF:KDR:mp

State Land Committee November 16, 2017

The State Land Committee convened at 1:55 pm.

State Land Committee Members Present:

Karen Feldman, Committee Chair, Chad Dawson, Arthur Lussi, William Thomas and Robert Stegemann (DEC)

Other Members and Designees Present:

Sherman Craig, Chairman, Daniel Wilt, John Ernst, Bradley Austin (ESD) and Lynne Mahoney (DOS)

Local Government Review Board

Frederick Monroe, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Terry Martino, Executive Director, Sarah Reynolds, Kathy Regan, Kevin Prickett, Walt Linck and Mary Palmer

Planning Division Report

Ms. Regan said State Lands has two items on the Agenda. The first item is a presentation by Steve Guglielmi (DEC) on the Public Draft UMP for the Sentinel Range Wilderness and is for information only. She noted that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will be accepting public comments until December 22, and will hold a public meeting at their Ray Brook headquarters on Thursday, December 7th at 6:00 pm.

Ms. Regan said the second item is a presentation by McCrea Burnham (DEC) and Kevin Prickett (APA) on the Proposed Guidance for Managing Primitive Tent Sites on the Forest Preserve. This guidance document has been developed by a working group over the last 3½ years. It was first brought to the Agency in October 2015 for information only, and then in December 2015 requesting authorization to proceed to public comment.

Ms. Regan said the majority of comments received were in support of the guidelines. Based on the comments, edits and clarifications were made to the document. The most significant change addresses the need for ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). APA and DEC staff believe these changes warrant further consideration by the public, and staff are requesting Board authorization to proceed to Public Comment with DEC until January 22, 2018.

Sentinel Range Wilderness UMP

Steve Guglielmi presented the Board with a brief overview of the Sentinel Range UMP and the management proposals. Some of the proposals are to build new trails; relocate or reconstruct existing trails; close trails that are in poor condition; provide adequate parking; provide campsites in areas that are convenient for users. He noted that the UMP proposals will also increase access opportunities for people with disabilities.

Ms. Feldman said she was impressed with the UMP and noted that it should be used as a template for future UMPs. She said the management actions were sensible, the analysis was good and the way it addressed the invasive species issues was also good.

Mr. Lussi agreed with Ms. Feldman. He said giving the public different alternatives to think about is helpful for making a decision on what they would prefer.

Dr. Dawson said he liked the conciseness of the report. He noted the title page says there is a Draft River Area Management Plan and asked what is meant by that terminology and felt there should be more clarity in that statement. Mr. Guglielmi said the Ausable River flows along the unit boundary and land within a half mile is considered part of the river corridor. He added that there are no direct river actions proposed.

Ms. Feldman suggested when staff come back after public comment that they could add something in the summary to clarify the purpose of the River Area Management Plan. Mr. Guglielmi said staff could accommodate this request.

Mr. Craig asked for clarity in the section on Terrestrial Plants where it reads "allow natural processes to continue their role" and "preserve and protect any threatened or endangered plant species or community." Mr. Craig stated that he thought these two statements could be contradictory. Mr. Craig asked if as climate change occurs and other species come in would this be considered a natural succession of plants or would the rare species be protected. Mr. Guglielmi said it is a complicated issue and staff handle it on a case-by-case basis.

Ms. Regan said rare species are ranked on how they occur globally and how they occur within the state. Whether a rare species is protected or natural processes are allowed to endanger that species may be determined on the overall rarity of that species.

Mr. Stegemann said it is notable to see the large trail-less area that is proposed. Dr. Dawson also complimented the trail-less area and said it will be interesting to see if the public comment will agree.

Mr. Stegemann said he wanted to publicly acknowledge the hard work that Mr. Guglielmi and his team have put into this UMP.

Mr. Monroe said there was a reference to Old Mountain Road and asked if it was still involved in litigation. Mr. Guglielmi responded affirmatively.

Primitive Tent Site Guidance

Kevin Prickett and McCrea Burnham provided a presentation on the Proposed Guidance for Managing Primitive Tent Sites on the Forest Preserve, which includes access for people with disabilities. Mr. Prickett said that staff will ask the Board for approval to proceed with simultaneous public comment with the DEC. The public comment period will run through January 22, 2018.

Ms. Feldman thanked staff for the consideration of disabilities. Even though we are required by law to follow regulations on accessibility it is important to make the Adirondacks friendly and welcoming to all.

Dr. Dawson noted that some proposals in the document apply to all land use classifications and some do not. There should be more clarification, especially for those that are not familiar with the different classifications.

Mr. Stegemann applauded the effort that has gone into the guidance. As staff look at the accessibility standards it would be good to add a statement that reads, "It is the DEC's intent to add accessibility features wherever possible," and to make it clear that staff want to do more than just meet the minimum.

Mr. Craig asked for clarification of the length of stay allowed for primitive tent sites and when a permit is needed.

Kris Alberga (DEC) said during the course of the year a person can get a permit for fourteen days. The exception is that a sixty-day camping permit can be issued during big game hunting season. That statement could be re-written to make it clearer.

Dr. Dawson said it is important for the Agency and DEC to continue coming up with these types of guidance documents as they create a bridge between the State Land Master Plan (SLMP) and what is actually happening on the ground.

Ms. Feldman noted the proposal to convene a study group to assess canoe route management and asked what the study group entails. Mr. Prickett said the Adirondack Canoe Route is a popular activity for colleges and camps. Mr. Prickett stressed the importance of convening the groups to discuss how the camping guidance affects their use of the canoe routes.

Ms. Feldman asked for clarification on large group camping and the number of people that will be allowed. Mr. Burnham said if the guidance is accepted, the current camping regulation would need modification to limit the number of campers to eight. Currently, regulations require a group of 10 or more individuals obtain a permit. The proposed regulation would reflect the APSLMP and restrict group size (without a permit) to eight.

Ms. Mahoney suggested that it be clearer for people to understand by saying no more than eight individuals. Ms. Feldman agreed.

Mr. Craig asked about the difficulty of managing group sizes. He noted that keeping college orientation trips paddling Cranberry Lake in compliance would be arduous.

Ms. Feldman asked for a motion authorizing to proceed with simultaneous public comment.

By motion of Mr. Lussi, seconded by Dr. Dawson, all were in favor of proceeding with a public comment period.

Old Business

None

New Business

Mr. Lussi noted that he did not agree with Judge Main's decision on the Travel Corridor. Based upon Judge Main's decision, the Agency should try to clarify the definition of travel corridor and Mr. Lussi hopes that the Agency is exploring that possibility. Mr. Lussi also thanked the movement to try and deal with the storage of rail cars.

Karen Feldman, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.