



## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Barbara Rice, Executive Director

FROM: Mitchell Jones, Environmental Program Specialist 1 Trainee

DATE: April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024

RE: Staff Review of the April 2024 Proposed Final UMP Amendment for Lake George Beach and Battlefield Park.

Staff have completed review of the April 2024 proposed final draft unit management plan (UMP) amendment for the Lake George Beach and Battlefield Park.

The UMP proposes the construction of a reinterment site for soldiers' remains disturbed on Courtland St., in the Town of Lake George. The remains are associated with a hospital established at Fort George in July 1776. The reinterment site is proposed in Lake George Battlefield Park on the east side of Fort George Road and northeast of the Lake George Park Commission's office and Battlefield Park Visitor Center. The extent of the proposed site covers approximately 0.2 acres. The site will use above ground columbarium structures of the type used to house cremated remains in traditional cemeteries. Six structures six feet long and three feet high are proposed. They will be made of gray Barre granite. The site also includes improved walkways, benches, interpretive signage, and landscaping incorporating native plant species.

Agency staff worked with DEC staff to assure compliance with the APSLMP.

On January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Agency Board authorized staff to proceed to public comment for the proposed UMP. The public comment period ran through February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Forty-one public comments (i.e., emails and letters) were received during this period.

No public comments received involved APSLMP conformance issues.

The Lake George Battlefield Park is classified as an Intensive Use Area (IUA). IUAs are facilities for intensive forms of outdoor recreation. Two types of IUAs are identified in the APSLMP: day use areas and campgrounds. The Lake George Battlefield Park is listed as a day use area and includes approximately 93 acres according to the 1981 UMP.

The APSLMP identifies Fort George & Battleground as a special management area. Historically, this park has been managed as an intensive use day use area with an emphasis on the area's historic value. The proposed development will provide facilities for a significant number of visitors and provide them with the understanding and appreciation of the area's history consistent with the character of the Adirondack Park. The proposed reinterment site will have minimal adverse impacts on surrounding state lands and nearby private holdings while also providing an option consistent with the respectful treatment of the Courtland St. human remains.

The APSLMP outlines requirements for construction and development activities in IUAs. The proposed reinterment site conforms to these requirements. The proposal avoids material alteration of wetlands. There are no wetlands present or in close proximity to the proposed reinterment location. Proposed topographic alterations are minimal. The area is relatively flat. Little to no vegetative clearing is proposed. Vegetation in the area of the proposed management action mainly consists of mowed grass with one 30-inch diameter white pine that will be incorporated into the project. No tree-cutting is proposed. Furthermore, the plan proposes planting of native trees, shrubs, and other vegetation to help the site blend with the relatively wild and undeveloped character of the Adirondack Park and preserve the scenic, natural and open space resources of the area.

It is the opinion of staff that the proposed final draft of the 2024 UMP amendment for Lake George Beach and Battlefield Park conforms to the general guidelines and criteria of the APSLMP.