



Draft Minutes
State Land Committee
February 2012 Agency Meeting
RB:JEC:lhb

**MINUTES OF THE STATE LAND COMMITTEE MEETING
February 16, 2012**

Committee members in attendance included Agency Chairwoman Leilani Ulrich, William Thomas, William Valentino, Sherman Craig and Designee Robert Stegemann, Department of Environmental Conservation, and Richard Booth, Committee Chair. Members Frank Mezzano, Arthur Lussi, and Designees Dierdre Scozzafava, Department of State, and Jen McCormick, Department of Economic Development joined the Committee. Also participating in the meeting was Executive Director Fred Monroe of the Local Government Review Board. Staff included Executive Director Terry Martino, Associate Counsel John Banta, Planning Director James Connolly, Associate Natural Resource Planner Walter Linck, and Senior Natural Resources Planner Kevin Prickett.

The Committee meeting convened at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Deputy Director, Planning Report (J. Connolly)

Mr. Connolly noted the State Lands activity report was included in the Park Policy and Planning Division report which was part of the Agency mailing material distributed to the Board. He noted that an additional chart which tracks the progress of individual unit management plans has been included in the State Land activity report.

Hoffman Notch Wilderness Unit Management Plan (B. Thomas, DEC)

This was a first reading of the proposed UMP for the Hoffman Notch Wilderness area presented by DEC staff member Ben Thomas. Mr. Connolly noted that the CD that was included in the mailing packet contained a copy of the proposed management plan for this area. A copy of the draft management plan for the Hoffman Notch Wilderness Area has also been added to the Agency's website. Mr. Connolly explained that a presentation on SLMP compliance will be given by Agency staff during next month's meeting. At that time, a draft resolution will be presented for Board consideration. He encouraged Committee members to review the sections of the Unit Management Plan related to proposed management actions for the area as well as other relevant sections including responses to public comments and implementation schedules.

Mr. Thomas described the geographical characteristics of the area to the Board. He discussed various trails within the unit as well as the potential connection with the North Country National Scenic Trail system. Member Thomas asked what the difference in topography is between the Wilderness area of the unit and the Vanderwacker Wild Forest area which adjoins the unit. Ben Thomas responded that the division line is an old jeep trail or an old road along the boundary

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between the two units. Mr. Thomas noted that the former road is currently designated as a snowmobile trail. There are three private camps located there which have deeded access via this road from the south.

The plan proposes to have trail heads at each access area which will provide information to the public about the area. Information will also be included on the DEC website to inform the public about the area.

Member Craig asked who holds fee title of the easement property located to the north. DEC staff member Tom Martin responded that the lands are former Finch Pruyn lands. Committee Chair Booth asked where the National Scenic Trail would enter the unit. Ben Thomas responded the trail would likely enter the unit via the southwestern corner from across the Vanderwacker Wild Forest unit however, the exact location has not yet been determined. Mr. Booth commented on the need to connect a cross-Park trail to the High Peaks area.

Local Government Review Board Executive Director Monroe asked if the parking area located at the end of Moore Road was on private property. Mr. Thomas replied that the parking lot is located on land purchased by the State.

Designee Stegemann asked about the snowmobile trail. Ben Thomas responded that he had tried to follow the trail last year but had difficulty due to conditions. He noted that staff is trying to find an appropriate location for a connector trail along the easement land to the north of the Unit.

Member Craig asked if there was information on the number of users and types of uses of the area. Ben Thomas responded that in the area near Severance Mountain there are approximately 5,000 users annually. He noted the primary users are hikers, hunters, trappers, snowshoers and skiers in the winter.

Member Mezzano asked if the local governments around the unit had given any input. Ben Thomas responded that he had been in contact with the Supervisor of the Town of Schroon, Cathy Moses and Town Board member Robert Friedman. The Town passed a resolution supporting the proposed plan.

Local Government Review Board Executive Director Fred Monroe asked if information regarding any type of constitutional amendment for a ski area on Hoffman Mountain had been obtained. Ben Thomas responded affirmatively. Mr. Connolly added that the public comment section does address this subject.

DEC Region 6 Unit Management Plan Implementation (D. Smith, DEC)

Mr. Smith reported on UMP implementation through DEC Region 6 Lands and Forests Program sub-offices. He reviewed management actions that DEC Region 6 staff have undertaken in the Independence River Wild Forest; Five Ponds Wilderness; Pigeon Lake Wilderness; and the Cranberry Lake Wild Forest.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.