



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Jim Connolly

FROM: Kevin G. Prickett

DATE: March 7, 2012

RE: Staff Recommendation: Hoffman Notch Wilderness Area
Proposed Final Unit Management Plan (UMP)

Like all Wilderness and Wild Forest lands of the Adirondack Park, the Hoffman Notch Wilderness has unique characteristics. Lands within the 38,488 Wilderness area were first acquired as a result of tax sales in 1871. As a result, trees with enormous girths can be found speckling the forests. From logging camps, spring houses, and Thomas Cole's 1838 painting of Hoffman Mountain, a long history of human use and enjoyment of this area is evident. Today, the dominant feature of the unit, Hoffman Mountain, is a trailless mountain covered in thick spruce and fir. The hardest hiker's abilities are tested in reaching the summit at an elevation of 3,693 feet. Its lower elevations offer ponds for fishing, woods for hunting, and trails for hiking, skiing and snowshoeing. From the bushwhacker seeking a backcountry challenge far from anyone, to the family visiting the Adirondacks hoping to take in the view from the summit of Severance Hill, this Wilderness exemplifies qualities for which Wilderness areas were established in the Park.

During the review of the Public Draft UMP, DEC and APA staff resolved several resource protection issues regarding invasive species management, ownership clarification, addition of campsites to support the North Country National Scenic Trail, and cooperative work at the Big Pond Trail to site a new trail or reroute portions of this existing trail to avoid adverse impacts to wetlands.

Staff have reviewed the Hoffman Notch Wilderness Proposed Final Unit Management Plan (May 2010) and recommend that it be determined to be in compliance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

Attached are relevant UMP sections, including: page 87 that was revised as a result of recent discussions between APA and DEC

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regarding competitive events, general information section, proposed management recommendations section, schedule for implementation section, public comment summary section, proposed and existing facilities map, entry points map, proposed map correction map, and public comments received by the APA.

KGP:JEC:lhb

Attachments