



**M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Terry Martino  
**FROM:** Jim Connolly  
**DATE:** May 31, 2012  
**SUBJECT:** Highlights of Planning Division Activities for  
May 2012

**REGIONAL PLANNING**

**Meeting of Military Airspace Advisory Committee**

Staff attended a meeting of the Military Airspace Committee for Northern New York which met in Tupper Lake on May 16. The Committee was first established by former Governor Mario Cuomo in response to local and environmental group concerns about low-level jet training over the Adirondacks and Tug Hill Region. The Committee is chaired by NYSDEC Region 6 Director Judy Drabicki and consists of representatives of county government, environmental organizations and agricultural groups concerned with the potential impacts of military training in the Fort Drum area. Staff from NY Air National Guard, as well as other military units, provide background information to the Committee for review and comment. NY Air National Guard is primarily responsible for management of Fort Drum's flight training and target range on the base. At the meeting, Lt. Col. Caputo of the Vt Air National Guard base in Burlington, Vt. presented information on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for deployment of F-35A fighter jets in Burlington. Once deployed, the F-35A's are expected to do more training at higher flight levels than is currently done with F-16's. Military air training space over the Adirondacks and northern New York is used for training by units from many states in the northeast and training routes have been recently reconfigured to avoid wilderness areas in the Park as much as possible. Lt. Col. Tomaselli of the Vt Air National Guard briefed the committee on current usage of the air range at Fort Drum. A briefing on wind

farms currently being proposed in the Tug Hill area was provided. Base officials are concerned with potential impacts of large wind farms on radar and low-level military aircraft training routes near Fort Drum. APA staff were credited with initiating an inter-agency notification procedure which regularly provides Fort Drum staff with information on recent applications for towers being proposed within the Adirondack Park. Fort Drum staff use the notification to open communications with applicants and provide reminders of potential FAA requirements for lighting on towers greater than 200ft.

**Meeting of Lake Champlain Heritage Area Advisory Committee**

On May 14, staff attended a meeting of the Lake Champlain Heritage Area Partnership Advisory Committee which was held at the Clinton County Historical Society in Plattsburgh. The Committee reviewed their annual workplan, reviewed the budget preparation schedule for Federal Fiscal Year 2012/13 and initiated discussion of upcoming budget priorities. Several priority projects will be initiated this year through National Park Service funding, including interpretive material and sponsorship of historical re-enactments in conjunction with the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812. Funding has also been allocated to increase stakeholder & organizational participation in the Lake Champlain National Heritage Area through group meetings and local grant awards. Two major meetings on the Heritage Area are planned for later this year. A meeting of New York, Vermont and Quebec heritage area site managers will be held during the summer and a meeting of National Park Service Heritage Area staff in conjunction with a meeting of the Northeast Region of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas will be held in November in Burlington, Vt.

**Preparation for Panel Discussion for Northern Forest Institute's Symposium on Land Use & Ethics**

Deputy Director Jim Connolly moderated panel discussion on the topic of Ethical Workforce and Economic Development in the Context of Environmental Conservation which will be presented at a Land Use Symposium which was held at SUNY-ESF's Adirondack Interpretive Center in Newcomb, NY on June 2. Participants on the panel included Adirondack Council Executive Director Brian Houseal, Workforce Development Institute Executive Director Ed Murphy and Cecil Corbin-Mark of Harlem's Environmental Justice organization.

**STATE LAND ACTIVITIES**

Staff participated in a meeting of the Forest Preserve Advisory Committee which was held at DEC headquarters in Albany on May 22. DEC attorneys presented background information on working proposals for Article XIV amendments to resolve the longstanding ownership disputes in Raquette Lake's Township 40 and for a potential land swap proposal to expand the NYCO wollastonite mine in Lewis, New York. Agenda topics also included presentations on the status of Unit Management Plans for the Catskill and Adirondack Parks, a report on the status of Forest Ranger vacancies, an update on DOT's efforts in the Catskill Park to comply with Federal Highway Administration sign standards, a discussion of the FHWA exemption for the use of yellow on brown location signs in the Adirondack Park and a request to the group to provide feedback and input on efforts to improve DEC/APA efficiencies.

On May 9, State land staff consulted with DEC staff concerning a potential alternative snowmobile trail and bridge crossing of East Stony Creek in Wilcox Lake Wild Forest; this is part of APA staff review of the draft UMP for this area. On May 11, DEC and APA staff participated in a conference call to discuss proposed snowmobile routes in the Wilcox Lake Wild Forest area. Later, on May 29, State land staff joined DEC staff for a day of field work related to the same potential alternative.

On May 1, State land staff consulted with the Supervisor of the Town of Inlet, John Frey, concerning some potential canoe carry improvements at Fifth and Sixth Lakes, along the Northern Forest Canoe Trail.

On May 7, APA State land and RASS staff conducted a site visit to Whiteface Mountain Ski Center as part of staff's review of the proposed draft UMP amendment for the area. Later, on May 14, State land staff conveyed informal comments on the draft amendment to Region 5 DEC staff for their review and transmission to ORDA.

On May 8, State land staff joined DEC staff of the "Work Group on Primitive Camping in the Adirondacks" for site visits and consultation concerning design criteria for roadside, walk-in primitive tent sites.

State Land staff field checked proposed locations for a lean-to relocation in the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness.

State Land staff field checked a proposed parking area (UMP amendment needed) for the Pharaoh Lake Wilderness.

State Land staff reviewed a lean-to project for the Pharaoh Lake Wilderness area. DEC needs to replace the roof on a lean-to which is non-compliant with the SLMP condition of setback distance from shoreline. This construction is characterized as major. Major construction projects, such as this, should include relocation to become compliant (100 feet from water). In this case, there is not a good place for the lean-to to be relocated. Removing the lean-to will result in illegal camping which would be difficult to enforce. The current set back from the water is approximately 75 feet. State Land staff agree with DEC staff that the lean-to should stay in its current location for resource protection. DEC staff will screen the lean-to and make additional tent camping at this location difficult and undesirable.

State Land staff field checked primitive camp site locations for the Ferris Lake Wild Forest UMP. GPS points and photos were taken to determine compliance with the SLMP.

State land staff met with Ranger Ploss in Ferris Lake Wild Forest management area to see water accessible sites and review potential UMP issues. State land staff began GIS modeling for potential alternative campsites in the Ferris Lake Wild Forest area.

State Land staff reviewed a JIF for a power line along Route 30 in the Sargent Ponds Wild Forest.

State Land staff worked with Regulatory staff on an 814 Order for road work in the Cascade Pass (Route 73). The project involves placing machinery outside of the DOT right-of-way into the High Peaks Wilderness area.

State land staff consulted with RASS staff for a proposal to lime five lakes in the Five Ponds Wilderness area. The Fisheries division at DEC has been sent a copy of the State Land JIF.

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State land staff attended the Public Meeting for the proposed Taylor Pond Complex Unit Management Plan.

State land staff presented the Scenic Byway Project (Wilmington Notch Route 86) at the Institute of Transportation Engineers North East District Annual Meeting.

State land staff worked with DEC to map the Gooseneck Pond Primitive Area.

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