



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

**TO:** Terry Martino

**FROM:** Jim Connolly

**DATE:** May 1, 2013

**RE:** Draft SEQR Documents: Classification of Essex Chain, Indian River, OK Slip Falls, and OSC Parcels and Reclassification of Adjacent State Lands

Attached is the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) which will be reviewed at the May Agency Board meeting. In addition to a presentation on the draft SEQR material and classification/reclassification alternatives, Agency staff will request Board authorization to proceed to public notice and hearing on the draft SEQR documents and the alternatives which are presented in the DSEIS. The SEQR document considers classification alternatives for the Essex Chain, Indian River, OK Slip Falls and OSC acquisitions. It also considers action to reclassify the Hudson Gorge Primitive Area to Wilderness and potential reclassification of portions of the Vanderwhacker and Blue Mountain Wild Forests.

Staff have prepared the attached documents in consultation with DEC staff. Eight classification alternatives have been identified ranging from Wilderness to Wild Forest. Several alternatives have been identified within each classification categories. Suggested unit boundaries have also been identified. Please note that Agency staff may consider alternative classifications and boundaries which may be identified and considered throughout the public comment period and the classification process.

A series of public hearings are proposed to be conducted both inside and outside of the Park, as required by the State Land Master Plan (SLMP). Upon completion of the public comment process, staff will prepare a Final Supplemental Impact Statement (FSEIS) which will include a summary of public comments received and a staff recommendation on the classification package. The FSEIS and classification

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recommendations will then be considered by the Agency at a future Board meeting.

The DSEIS begins with an Executive Summary followed by background on the processes and documents used by Agency staff to guide the classification process. The document then provides information on physical and biological characteristics of the area and other considerations which provide the basis for classification as identified in the SLMP. The DSEIS also includes documentation on existing facilities and deeded rights. The next section of the DSEIS discusses environmental impacts, unavoidable adverse impacts, mitigation measures and other topics related to the environmental assessment. A detailed summary and map of each classification alternative is provided.

At the Agency meeting, staff will provide a detailed overview of the classification area, recreational opportunities under different classification alternatives, and a description of the alternatives under consideration.

JEC:lhb

Attachments