



Division of Lands & Forests

Cranberry 50 Trail Connectors

Proposed Final Amendment

to the

**1984 Cranberry Lake Wild Forest
Unit Management Plan**

St. Lawrence County

May 2014

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Joseph J. Martens, Commissioner

Lead Agency: (in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency)
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UMP AMENDMENT 2

INTRODUCTION

The Cranberry Lake Wild Forest (CLWF) is located in the Towns of Fine, Clifton and Colton, St. Lawrence County. The unit contains approximately 65,919 acres. A unit management plan was completed in 1984. Since the adoption of the CLWF UMP an amendment for Bicycle Trail designation across all Wild Forest units, including CLWF, was completed and approved (1988). This amendment proposes the creation of two foot trails, the Cranberry Lake 50 West and the Cranberry Lake 50 East connector trails. When fully implemented, these connector trails will enable hikers and skiers to avoid 4.14 miles of the Cranberry Lake 50 Trail's current route along NYS Route 3, making for a more pleasant and safer experience, while still utilizing 1.56 miles along Route 3 to access the amenities within the hamlet of Cranberry Lake.

The proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Western Connector Trail will connect the first loop of the Peavine Swamp ski trail to the Columbian Road via NY State Forest Preserve and conservation easement lands currently owned by Molpus Woodlands Group, LLC. This proposed trail can be built without significant tree cutting, but will require a bridge on Forest Preserve land to be built for a stream crossing.

Once the public reaches Columbian Road, they can continue hiking the Town River Walk, crossing the outlet of Cranberry Lake on an existing footbridge, then continue along Riverside Drive to NYS Route 3. Once on NYS Route 3, hikers will continue through town for 1.56 miles until they reach the Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Connector Trail.

The proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Connector Trail will connect the DEC parking area east of Cranberry Lake, via a short segment of the Gilbert Tract ski trail, to the existing Connector Trail. The Connector Trail connects the Cranberry Lake State Campground to the Burnt Bridge Pond Trail. The Burnt Bridge Pond Trail is part of the Cranberry Lake 50 Trail. The proposed trail will follow an abandoned logging road and will not require any tree cutting.

IV. PROJECTED USE AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSED

A. FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

Foot Trail Development

The Cranberry 50 Route is an approximately 50 mile hiking loop around Cranberry Lake that was proposed in the Five Ponds Wilderness Area UMP (1995). This route, using several trails in the Five Ponds Wilderness and Cranberry Lake Wild Forest, also includes some mileage on NYS Route 3 east and west of the hamlet of Cranberry Lake.

Following some investigation into options, two new Class IV foot trails will be developed which will allow hikers to avoid 4.14 miles of travel along NYS Route 3.

The proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Western Connector Trail will extend from the first loop of the Peavine Swamp ski trail east to a predetermined location for a stream crossing. This crossing will require a bridge to be constructed. Approximately three trees will be cut for the bridge construction. The exact location of this trail on both sides of this bridge will be determined by the Department. One potential route has been identified. An additional designated campsite has also been identified on the Peavine Swamp ski trail.

Once this trail reaches the NY State property line, it will continue east on lands currently owned by Molpus Woodlands Group, LLC, subject to a conservation easement held by NY State. The proposed route on easement lands follows a main haul road used in timber harvesting operations. This route will minimize tree cutting.

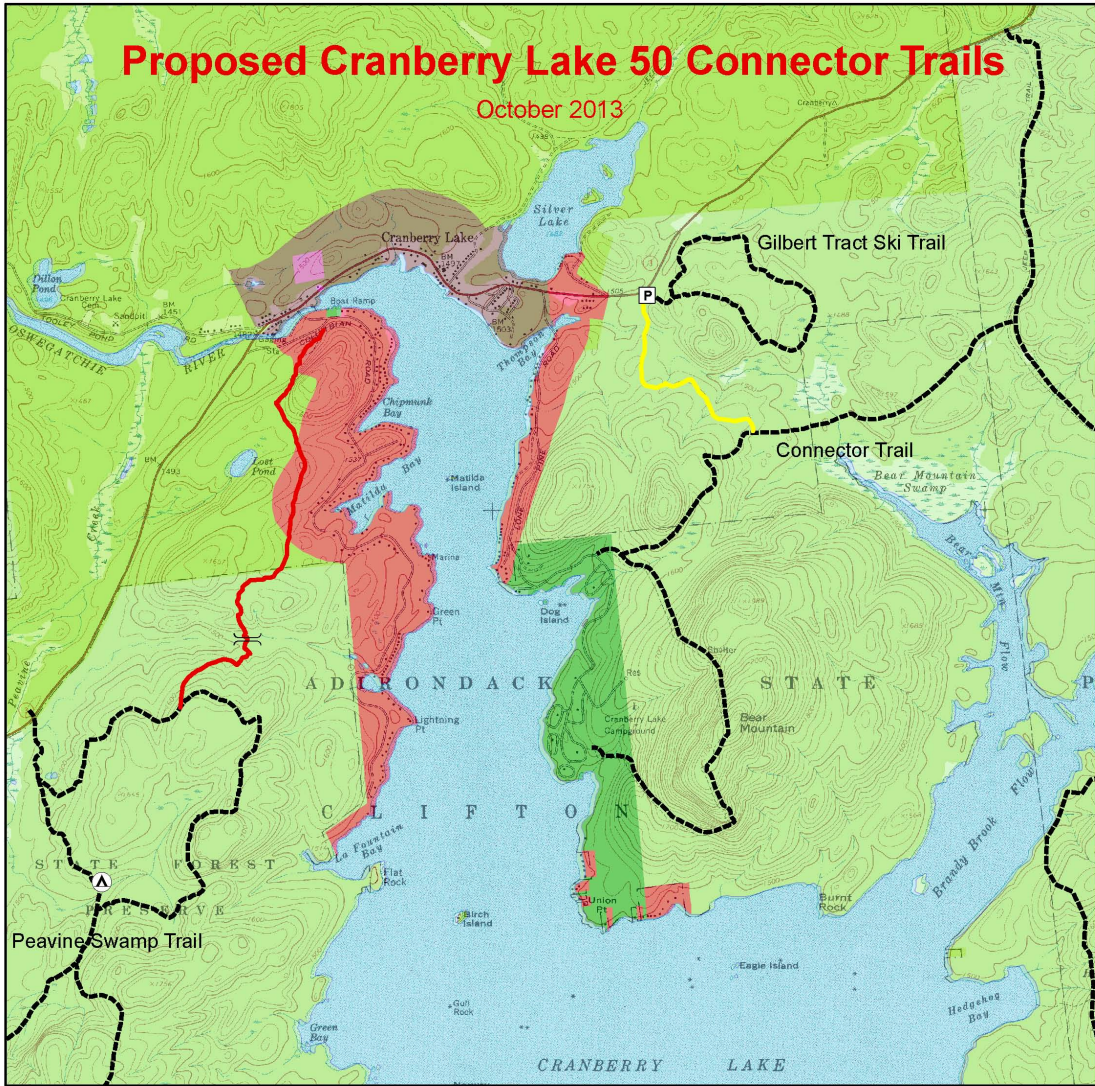
The Cranberry Lake 50 Western Connector Trail will end on Columbian Road in the Town of Cranberry Lake. At this point hikers can continue hiking on the Town River Walk, crossing the outlet of Cranberry Lake on an existing footbridge, and continue along Riverside Drive to NYS Route 3. Once on NYS Route 3, hikers will continue through town for 1.56 miles until they reach the Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Connector Trail. The Cranberry Lake 50 Western Connector Trail removes 2.24 miles of the Cranberry Lake 50 trail from NYS Route 3.

The proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Connector Trail will extend from the Gilbert Tract ski trail parking area to the existing Connector Trail. A new kiosk for both the Gilbert Tract Ski Trail and the Cranberry Lake 50 Trail will be constructed at the Gilbert Tract parking lot. The Connector Trail connects the Cranberry Lake State Campground to the Burnt Bridge Pond Trail, the latter which is part of the Cranberry Lake 50 Trail. The proposed trail will follow an abandoned logging road, will not require any tree cutting, and will be approximately 5,000 feet long. Consultation with APA staff has determined that siting the trail to follow an abandoned logging trail will be preferred, with minor re-routes around wetlands if they are encountered. The Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Trail will remove 1.90 miles of the Cranberry Lake 50 trail from NYS Route 3.

The Department will work with the Agency to determine if there is a need for a wetlands permit; any new structures, such as bog bridging, associated with a wetland permit are authorized by the amendment.

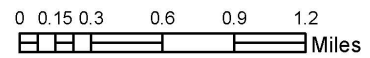
Proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Connector Trails

October 2013



Legend

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ----- Existing DEC Trails | APA Land Classifications | Light Blue Primitive |
| Red Line CL50 Connector West | Land Classification | Light Green Wild Forest |
| Yellow Line CL50 Connector East | Brown Hamlet | Dark Green Intensive Use |
| Double Line Proposed Foot Bridge | Pink Moderate Intensity | Purple State Administrative |
| Triangle Proposed Campsite | Light Green Resource Management | Blue Water |



Map and GPS data for connector trails by J. Savage, SUNY-ESF Ranger School



Typical character of proposed Cranberry 50 East Connector Trail.



Wet section of proposed Cranberry 50 East Connector Trail.



Junction with the Connector Trail and the proposed Cranberry 50 East Connector Trail.



Peavine Swamp Ski Trail – Loop #1



Proposed Foot Bridge Crossing Site – CL 50 Western Connector Trail

Appendix 1 – Response to Public Comments

The Department held a public comment period on the Draft UMP amendment from April 9 to April 25, 2014. During that time, one e-mail comment was received. A summary of that comment is below, followed by DEC's response.

Comment:

State Boat Launch facilities along Route 3 will see increased use as hikers seek parking near the re-routed trail. This increased use will bring with it an increase in problems such as trash, human waste, etc.

Response:

The parking lots at these Boat Launch sites are rarely full, and will likely see only a slight increase in use as a result of this trail re-route. These sites are already monitored by Department staff, including Forest Rangers, and any increase in inappropriate use will be dealt with as it arises.