



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

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**Proposed Final Amendment 2**  
To the  
**Jessup River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan**  
  
Hamilton County

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Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Joseph J. Martens, Commissioner

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Jessup River Wild Forest (JRWF) is located in the Towns of Arietta, Wells, Indian Lake, and Lake Pleasant in Hamilton County. It is approximately 47,350 acres in size. A Unit Management Plan (UMP) for this area was completed in 2006. A subsequent UMP amendment to address snowmobile use within this unit was approved in 2010.

This UMP Amendment proposes to provide better access to the area's snowmobile trail network by allowing public motor vehicle access along 900 feet of existing road across the JRWF. The existing road leads to a proposed parking area on the Perkins Clearing Conservation Easement, the approval for which is being sought separately in an Interim Recreation Management Plan (RMP). This amendment does not propose any changes to the snowmobile trail configuration within the unit.

## **IV. PROPOSED MANAGEMENT ACTIONS**

### **C. FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT**

#### **24. Trailhead Parking**

##### **Background:**

The JRWF has a fair amount of public highway road frontage. However, there are few places to park motor vehicles safely off the road shoulder. Parking areas that provide access to popular locations often reach capacity, resulting in an overflow of vehicles along the roadsides. This is especially problematic during typically high-use winter months. The many miles of snowmobile trails in and around the JRWF attract snowmobilers along with their vehicles and trailers in tow. Currently a small parking area located along N.Y.S. Route 30, on conservation easement land, is a main parking and winter access point for the Perkins Clearing Easement. The inadequate size of the parking area often results in an overflow that creates unsafe conditions for passing motorists.

The snowmobile trail system within the JRWF is closely linked to trails provided by the Perkins Clearing and Speculator Tree Farm Conservation Easements. The extensive logging road network within the easement provides important snowmobile trail connections between State lands and the surrounding communities. Winter harvest activities on these lands often result in the closure and/or re-routing of snowmobile trails to avoid conflicts with log trucks. Providing additional access to the trail system will help mitigate the impact of trail closures and also help to keep these important community connections open.

##### **Objectives:**

The objectives of this Amendment are to alleviate unsafe conditions by providing additional parking, ensuring adequate public access, and mitigating the impact of trail closures to the snowmobile trail system in and around the JRWF, Perkins Clearing, and Speculator Tree Farm Conservation Easements.

## **Management Actions:**

### **Access Road**

This amendment proposes utilization of an existing roadway that is currently not being used to provide access to a parking area to be located within the Speculator Tree Farm Conservation Easement. The utilization of this existing roadway to allow access to the parking area will alleviate the unsafe condition of motor vehicles parking along NYS Route 30. The use of this existing roadway is essential to the administration of the area, no feasible alternative exists, and there will be no deterioration of the wild forest character or natural resource quality of the area.

The road enters JRWF on the east side of N.Y.S. Route 30 approximately 1.3 miles north of the Village of Speculator (See Figure 3). It runs generally in a north east direction from N.Y.S. Route 30 for approximately 900 feet across JRWF lands to the adjacent conservation easement lands. This section of road was previously used for logging operations on the adjacent conservation easement land and is still in very good condition. Upon entering easement land, the access road will continue another 500 feet to an open clearing to be used as the parking area.

This road will be open year-round as a public motor vehicle road for recreation as described in the November 2005 Interim Recreation Management Plan for IP Conservation Easement, Hamilton 308, Speculator Tree Farm, and Perkins Clearing. The construction of the parking area will be addressed through an additional Interim Recreational Management Plan. Additional recreational opportunities will be made available through the completion of a full Recreation Management Plan at a later date.

The existing roadway is fairly flat and in good condition. No tree cutting will be required and only minor road work will be necessary. This will include scraping off the duff layer and applying gravel where needed. Two boulders at the entrance of the road near N.Y.S. Route 30 will be removed and a few blown down trees will be cleared from the corridor. Below, Figure 1 shows the current condition of the roadway on State land.

Figure 1: Access road location



### **Parking Area**

The parking area will be located entirely within the easement lands of Speculator Tree Farm. Utilization of an existing landing area will provide ample space for 8 or more vehicles with trailers. This will include one accessible parking space. The parking area will need some light grading to accommodate this use. Below Figure 2 shows the current state of the landing area.

Figure 2: Parking area location

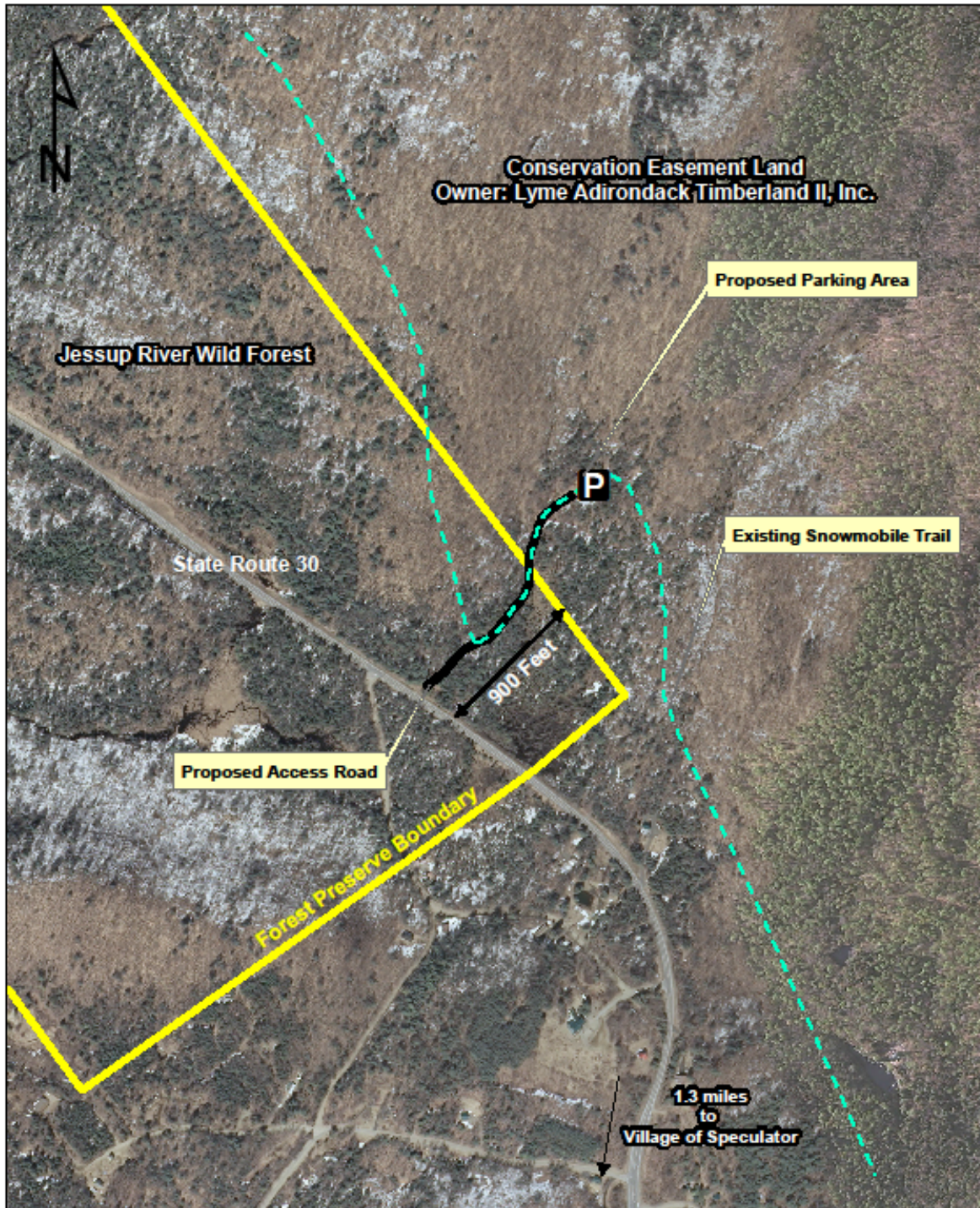


### **Kiosk and Register**

A kiosk with a trail register will be installed at the parking area. A detailed map depicting the surrounding trail system will be displayed, as well as appropriate trail use information. The kiosk will be built to accessible standards.

Figure 3:

### Jessup River Wild Forest UMP Amendment 2 Location Map



## Change to Jessup River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan – August 2006

Page 177 of the unit management plan in August of 2006 addresses “Roads Open to Public Motor Vehicle Use”. The proposed management actions in this amendment will change the mileage. The table included in this ump is an update to the “Roads Open to Public Motor Vehicle Use”.

**Table XVI - Roads Open to Public Motor Vehicle Use** (Existing and Future status)

<b>ROAD NAME</b>	<b>PRE-1972<sup>1</sup> MILEAGE</b>	<b>POST-UMP MILEAGE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PRIVATE ACCESS<sup>2</sup></b>
Old Military Road	0 miles Was private road only	0.7 mile	From IP boundary to Pillsbury Mountain trailhead. Acquired in 1983 through land exchange with IP.	No
Round Pond Road <sup>3</sup>	0.1 miles	0.1 mile	From Big Brook Road to IP lands. Acquired in 1890's.	Yes
Peasley Access Road <sup>2</sup>	0.1 mile	0.0 mile	From end of maintained town road (Fawn Lake Road) to trailhead, road continues to buildings on Sacandaga Lake. Appropriated in 1974.	Yes
Hernandez Loop Road	0.6 mile	0.6 mile	From end of Hernandez Road to Silver Lake Wilderness boundary line. Acquired in 1964.	No
Gilman Lake Access Road	0.1 mile	0.1 mile	Section of road between Gilmantown Road and Gilman Lake. Acquired in 1963.	No
Jessup Access Road	?	0.2 mile	From NYS Route 30 to Lyme boundary.	Yes
<b>Total Mileage</b>	<b>0.9 miles</b>	<b>1.7 miles</b>		

<sup>1</sup> Pre-1972 road mileage is based upon DEC records and land acquisition files.

<sup>2</sup> This road will be gated at the proposed new trailhead at the end of the town road. A section of this road will be open between the gate and accessible parking area for persons with disabilities holding permits under Policy CP-3, subject to closure for seasonal conditions.

<sup>3</sup> This road provides access to State lands, private landowners, International Paper, Company, Inc. and its lessees.