



LEILANI CRAFTS ULRICH
Chairwoman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

Draft Minutes
State Lands Committee
July 2015 Agency Meeting

**MINUTES OF THE STATE LANDS COMMITTEE MEETING
July 9, 2015**

The State Lands Committee convened at approximately 10:00 a.m.

State Land Committee Members Present

Richard Booth, Sherman Craig, William Thomas, Robert Stegemann.

Other Members and Designees Present

Karen Feldman, Arthur Lussi, Daniel Wilt, Dierdre Scozzafava, Bradley Austin, Lani Ulrich.

Local Government Review Board

Fred Monroe.

Agency Staff Present

Terry Martino, James Townsend, Kathy Regan.

Approval of the May Committee Minutes

A motion to approve the draft committee minutes was made by Mr. Stegemann and was seconded by Mr. Thomas. Mr. Stegemann, Mr. Craig, and Mr. Thomas were in favor. Mr. Booth opposed.

Approval of the June Committee Minutes

A motion to approve the draft committee minutes was made by Mr. Thomas and was seconded by Chairwoman Ulrich. Mr. Stegemann, Mr. Craig, and Mr. Thomas were in favor. Mr. Booth opposed.

Planning Division Report (Kathy Regan)

Kathy Regan reviewed the division report. She noted the public hearings that are currently being conducted by Department staff for the Essex Chain Lakes Complex UMP and the Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor UMP Amendment. She discussed the UMP process. She also discussed the SLMP amendment process and noted that a

draft supplemental environmental impact statement will be written by staff to be released to the Board at a future meeting.

Alger Island Campground and Fourth Lake Day Use Area UMP (Kathy Regan)

Ms. Regan noted this proposed plan had been presented at the April meeting after release of the Department's public draft and their public meeting. Ms. Regan then explained the various stages of the UMP process. She noted that the UMPs that are before the Board are proposed final drafts and staff will recommend approval of the draft resolutions that were included in the mailing packet.

Ms. Regan noted that the Fourth Lake Day Use Area (within the Alger Island Campground unit) currently is classified as Wild Forest and will need to be reclassified as Intensive Use. This reclassification will be done separately as part of a larger classification package.

There are two visitor docks at the Fourth Lake Day Use Area, both of which will be replaced. The parking area is proposed to be paved and stormwater runoff issues will be addressed.

At the Alger Island Campground there currently exist two cabins which can either be replaced with a primitive tent site or lean-to.

Ms. Regan stated the major concern for the Island is waste management. She noted that alternatives are being explored to address the 17 non-conforming pit privies by replacing them with composting or self-contained units. Chairwoman Ulrich voiced concern regarding the use of barges to transport waste. DEC staff member Mike Buzelli commented there are currently containment units being utilized in the Lake George and Saranac Lake Wild Forest Intensive Use areas that are regularly maintained by the Department. Ms. Regan noted the preference is to use the self-contained units however this may not be possible.

Mr. Craig noted that there is a plastic tub in a composting toilet and stated he did not realize that the use of non-natural materials would be a concern in an Intensive Use Area. Ms. Regan responded the use of non-natural materials in an Intensive Use Area is still a concern.

Ms. Feldman asked if both alternatives would be in compliance with SLMP. Ms. Regan answered that staff are currently reviewing the use of non-natural materials for pit privies in the amendment of the Master Plan but noted that Intensive Use areas can be more lenient in the use of materials.

Ms. Regan asked Designee Stegemann about the use of barges in the Saranac Lake Wild Forest area. Designee Stegemann referred the question to Mike Buzelli of Department staff who responded that containment units are currently used both in the

Saranac Lake Wild Forest area as well as the Lake George Intensive Use areas. He noted it is not necessarily the preferred way, but feels the units are better than the use of conforming privies that leak. He added that measures are taken to minimize risks and maintenance is scheduled to be done at least once a year. There is no known problem in using the barge method.

Ms. Regan then discussed issues with several lean-tos in the area. She stated that as the lean-tos fall into disrepair, they will be replaced and relocated as necessary to be compliant with the SLMP. Ms. Feldman asked if the lean-tos predate 1972. Department staff responded that many of them do pre-date 1972 and the SLMP. Mr. Booth stated that regardless it does not negate the fact that they need to be SLMP compliant.

Ms. Regan stated that Agency staff feel the proposed UMP is compliant with SLMP and recommended approval and adoption of the draft resolution that was enclosed in the mailing packet.

Motion was made by Mr. Stegemann to move the draft resolution to the full Agency for approval. Motion was seconded by Mr. Thomas. All were in favor.

Community Connector Trail Plan (Kathy Regan)

Ms. Regan presented this plan in Mr. Linck's absence. She noted that the plan was presented initially at the June 2014 Agency meeting and again at the May 2015 Agency meeting. This is a second reading of the proposed final draft.

Ms. Regan reviewed the management actions associated with the proposed plan. She noted that Section 5 was removed from the Plan and is now a part of the Essex Lakes Chain Complex plan. Sections 1-4 are the only sections being reviewed for the Community Connector Trail Plan.

She then discussed the preferred alternative in Section 1 (mapped in red) which crosses private land (Town of Newcomb) and easement land held by the Department. Mr. Booth asked if this was an existing trail and Ms. Regan responded she did not believe so. She added that there would be approximately 3 miles of new trail with the preferred alternative.

Mr. Craig stated he assumed that the easement land will be timbered and asked what the possibility of the trail being closed is. Ms. Regan responded she did not know the details of the easement agreement, however, the possibility exists. Mr. Stegemann added that he was not sure either, but as is the case with other easements, every effort would be made to accommodate the season and the time of year and would not affect the trail. Ms. Regan added that the proposed trail is fine-tuned in the field prior to the work being performed and must conform to the snowmobile guidance.

Mr. Thomas asked about the bridge and parking area at the end of the trail. He asked if people could park at that location. Ms. Regan responded that the parking for snowmobiling must be done on Route 28N. The parking at the Historic Area is for cross country skiers. Mr. Thomas asked about a connection between trails in other units. Ms. Regan responded it is not a dead end trail. There is a connecting trail which is in the Essex Chain Lakes Complex UMP.

Mr. Wilt asked if the proposed trail through the easement land is a logging road. Ms. Regan responded affirmatively. She noted there are several wet areas and that the final location will be fine-tuned in the snowmobile work plan.

Ms. Regan then reviewed Section 2. She discussed the preferred alternative (mapped in red). She stated that staff believe the crossing of the trail over the Boreas River next to the highway is in conformance with the SLMP.

Mr. Booth asked for the crossing of the Boreas River to be reviewed again. Ms. Regan answered that the Boreas River is designated as a scenic river, and as noted in the SLMP, is to be managed as Wild Forest. In Wild Forest, snowmobiles and snowmobile bridges are allowed. By placing the bridge adjacent to the existing highway bridge, it is compliant with SLMP.

Mr. Booth asked if DOT has stated any objection to the proposed trail placement. Ms. Regan responded she did not know.

Mr. Wilt asked what happens if a groomer needs to cross the river. Ms. Regan responded the bridge would be wide enough to accommodate the groomer but will be done in conformance with the snowmobile guidance.

Mr. Thomas asked where the trail terminates. Ms. Regan responded that the trail does not terminate in Minerva; it connects to a trail to Schroon Lake.

Ms. Regan then reviewed Section 3, which does not have a preferred alternative. All four alternatives begin at the Roosevelt truck trail. One route is adjacent to the Boreas Pond tract which currently is owned by The Nature Conservancy. Three routes head toward North Hudson and cross over on a proposed new trail in the Vanderwhacker unit. Another route travels up through Vanderwhacker and joins the Gulf Brook Road which later comes out on the Blue Ridge Road. There are several different configurations and there is no preferred alternative. It cannot be said at this time if it will be able to be used as a snowmobile trail. Once the land is in New York State ownership, it needs to be classified, and depending on the classification, snowmobiling may or may not be allowed.

Mr. Craig asked if the alternative routes are SLMP compliant. If the preferred route does not work, would another proposal come back before the Agency to be voted on. Mr. Townsend and Ms. Regan responded affirmatively.

Ms. Regan then reviewed Section 4 which has a preferred alternative. That route begins on the Gulf Brook Road, runs down the existing logging road into the easement land and continues down to the Palmer Pond Bridge then back onto the Blueridge Road.

Mr. Lussi asked where the private landowners are located who are opposed to the snowmobile trail. Ms. Regan responded she believed in Section 3.

Ms. Regan then reviewed proposed trail mileage for Sections 1, 2 and 4. Section 3 was not included in this calculation because there is not a preferred alternative.

Mr. Craig asked if a trail had to be placed within a quarter of a mile of a scenic river in a Wild Forest area, would it still be considered to be compliant with SLMP. Ms. Regan responded (referring to the rivers section from the SLMP, pgs 44 and 45) having the trail adjacent to the crossing is allowable, otherwise a 2 mile distance between crossings is needed to conform with SLMP.

Ms. Regan then reviewed proposed campsite areas as well as the Palmer Pond Bridge and access to the dam outlet.

Ms. Regan noted 204 comments were received from the public during the comment period. She added that 15 comments were received after the deadline date.

Mr. Craig asked if any thought has been given to changing or adding a definition in the SLMP to deal with community connector trails as opposed to just addressing them as snowmobile trails. He added it seems more realistic to add a term to these types of trails as they seem much bigger than hiking trails and feels they should be defined in SLMP.

Mr. Booth asked that the draft resolution be refined to state that the trail leading to the bridge over the Boreas River is adjacent to or very close to the bridge. Staff agreed to edit the resolution.

Mr. Thomas asked if the railroad line (Section 2) is not available in the future would the proposal change. Ms. Regan responded that is difficult to say but currently the decision has to be made based on current conditions. Karyn Richards added that a multiple use trail is being proposed currently and therefore the railroad is not a preferred alternative. If in the future the use of railroad changes, a proposal might be to separate uses into two trails.

Ms. Feldman suggested a whereas clause stating trails will not traverse private lands, that eminent domain will not be used. Discussion ensued regarding Department policy. Mr. Townsend noted such a clause is not legally required as this issue is dealt with through the Department. Ms. Feldman withdrew her suggestion.

Motion to move the draft resolution with suggested changes provided by Mr. Booth to the full Agency for approval was made by Chairwoman Ulrich and was seconded by Mr. Thomas. All were in favor.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:40

Video and MP3 audio recordings of the proceedings are available in their entirety via webcast at http://nysapa.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2