



LEILANI CRAFTS ULRICH
Chairwoman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

Draft Minutes
State Lands Committee
October 2015 Agency Meeting
10/29/15 2:00 p.m.

**MINUTES OF THE STATE LANDS COMMITTEE MEETING
October 8, 2015**

The State Lands Committee convened at approximately 1:45 p.m.

State Land Committee Members Present

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

Other Members and Designees Present

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

Local Government Review Board

Fred Monroe.

Agency Staff Present

Terry Martino, James Townsend, Kathy Regan, Walter Linck, Kevin Prickett, Matt McNamara.

Approval of the Draft September Committee Minutes

A motion to approve the draft committee minutes was made by Mr. Thomas and was seconded by Mr. Booth. Mr. Booth noted that he had some changes to the minutes. He reviewed the changes and an amended motion was made by Mr. Thomas to approve the draft minutes with the suggested changes from Mr. Booth. All were in favor.

Planning Division Report (Kathy Regan)

Kathy Regan reviewed the division report. She reminded the Board of the dates for Local Government Day 2016 – April 13 and 14. She stated Robyn Burgess would be sending an appointment out to the Steering Committee members to begin planning for the conference. She also discussed the second wetlands training session held by the Agency for Department staff. The training sessions will help to coordinate review between the Agency and the Department for both public and private land proposals.

Ms. Regan briefly discussed the Great South Woods Trail Network and noted that it will be coming back before the Agency.

Ms. Regan reviewed the steps the Agency will take in amending the State Land Master Plan. She said there are a number of changes proposed which are categorized as follows: ministerial changes, minor changes, additional content, clarification changes to the basic guidelines, and two major changes to the basic guidelines to include the use of all terrain bicycles in the Primitive Areas of the Essex Chain of Lakes Complex Unit and the use of non-natural materials for the bridge construction over the Cedar River. These proposals will include a list of alternatives including a no action alternative which is required under the SEQR Act. The Agency will act as Lead Agency.

Primitive Tent Site Guidance (Keith Rivers, DEC and Walter Linck, APA)

This item was for informational purposes only.

Mr. Rivers reviewed best management practices (BMPs) for primitive tentsites that were developed together by Department and Agency staff. He discussed the goals and recommendations from staff which were to allow for the following: protection of the natural resources while providing a visitor experience consistent with the land classification; compliance with the State Land Master Plan and DEC policies; and utilization of science based decision making processes for future management decision making using the Limits of Accessible Change (LAC) theory.

Mr. Rivers discussed the next steps in the process which include internal staff review between the Department and the Agency; simultaneous public comment review periods; Agency Board review for compliance with the State Land Master Plan; and final approval by the Board.

Mr. Linck noted there has been success in the Lake George Wild Forest Area implementing some of the BMPs, and stated that solutions to address current problems in areas such as the Floodwood Road should be part of the UMP planning process.

Mr. Booth asked that more specific examples be presented so the Board has a better understanding of the situations encountered by staff. He suggested that staff come back with another presentation using pictures and slides of both bad and good examples so the Board can see what seems to work. A field trip was also suggested. Mr. Linck suggested the Moose River Plains area for good examples.

Cross Country Ski Trail Guidance (Kevin Prickett, APA and Eric Kasza, DEC)

This item was for informational purposes only.

Mr. Prickett reviewed the State Land Master Plan definition of both a cross country ski trail and an improved cross country ski trail. He noted that cross country ski trails are

conforming in all classifications whereas the improved cross country ski trails are limited to Intensive Use Areas.

Mr. Prickett then reviewed the concept of backcountry skiing noting that this type of activity requires special gear consisting of lightweight equipment that can traverse the rugged terrain found in backcountry areas.

Mr. Prickett noted that when planning a trail, recreation values such as scenery, varying levels of skier experience, and limited impediments to travel to provide continuous, quality for the users is important.

Mr. Prickett stated that new draft guidance for backcountry skiing will be forthcoming but staff have not concluded work on the proposed guidance. He said the goals of the guidance are to encourage use while protecting natural resources, develop a resource for management guidance, and to provide a resource to help communities visualize what is possible. He noted that the guidance may provide for limited use of trails by skiers only. Mr. Stegemann asked if the trails are restricted to skiers only, how would the trails be managed during the summer months if they are to be closed to hikers. Would a ticket system be proposed? Mr. Prickett responded he was unsure but staff would be working out the details as the guidance progresses.

Mr. Prickett reviewed the next steps which include final staff review by both the Department and Agency, a simultaneous public comment period with the Department, Agency Board review for State Land Master Plan compliance, and final Board approval.

Mr. Booth suggested an additional step in the process. He asked that staff provide the Board with a preliminary draft as soon as possible so that the members could have time to review the document.

Whiteface UMP Amendment - Porcupine Lodge (Josh Clague, DEC, Kathy Regan, APA)

This item was for action seeking Board authorization to proceed to public comment.

Ms. Regan stated that the Department and Agency staff have agreed to undertake this proposed amendment on a two-meeting cycle.

Mr. Clague discussed the purpose of the proposal which entails re-introducing the public use of Porcupine Lodge at the Ski Center. The proposal includes the construction of a deck adjacent to the Porcupine Lodge. He stated that minor brush removal would need to occur to construct the deck, but no major tree cutting is proposed. He added that construction will occur outside of the nesting season (April 1 – August 31) for the Bicknell's Thrush and therefore there would be no impact to the species. He added that the Department's public comment period began October 7 and would run until October 22.

Mr. Craig asked how many people can be accommodated. Erin Keller, General Manger for Whiteface, ORDA, responded that it is dependent upon the weather but the intent of the lodge is to be short-term. It is intended to serve people for a short time as a warming hut. He added that historically it has been used as a warming hut and the intention is to maintain its use as such.

Mr. Booth asked for a motion to proceed to public comment which will be concurrent with the Department's. Motion was made by Mr. Stegemann and was seconded by Mr. Craig. All were in favor.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

The meeting was adjourned at approximately at 4:00 p.m.