



SHERMAN CRAIG
Chairman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

**DRAFT
RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY
WITH RESPECT TO THE
HIGH PEAKS WILDERNESS COMPLEX
UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**

Proposed for Adoption
by the Adirondack Park Agency
July 13, 2018

WHEREAS, Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act (APA Act) directs the Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) to develop, in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency (Agency), individual management plans for units of land classified in the Adirondack Park State Land Master (APSLMP) and requires such management plans to conform to the guidelines and criteria of the APSLMP; and

WHEREAS, in addition to such guidelines and criteria, the APSLMP prescribes the contents of unit management plans (UMPs) and provides that the Agency will determine whether a proposed individual UMP complies with such guidelines and criteria; and

WHEREAS, the Department prepared a UMP for the High Peaks Wilderness Complex (HPWC) in 1999; and

WHEREAS, the Department has prepared an amendment to the 1999 UMP, dated July 2018 (HPWC UMP Amendment); and

WHEREAS, the HPWC UMP Amendment proposes “additional recreational opportunities and facilities on these recently-classified wilderness lands in a manner that maximizes the protection of the wilderness resource and public enjoyment and appreciation of the Forest Preserve,” along with several proposals related to accessing the HPWC from the north at locations “that have special safety and natural resource protection issues;” and

WHEREAS, on May 10, 2018 the Department presented a draft of the HPWC UMP Amendment to the Agency; and

WHEREAS, the Agency and the Department established a concurrent 45-day public comment period on the draft UMP amendment and its conformance with the APSLMP, which ran through June 27, 2018, and the Department held three public meetings during the comment period in Albany, Newcomb and Lake Placid; and

WHEREAS, the Agency and the Department received a substantial number of oral and written comments during the public comment period; and

WHEREAS, the Department revised the draft HPWC UMP Amendment in response to some of the public comments received, and the Agency has considered those revisions; and

WHEREAS, the public comments raised several points with respect to conformance of the HPWC UMP Amendment with the APSLMP guidelines and criteria for the management and use of Wilderness lands and Agency staff have provided responses to those public comments for Agency consideration; and

WHEREAS, the Agency and the Department have recommitted to form a working group focused on developing management recommendations for technical climbing access within the Adirondack Forest Preserve including the use of fixed anchors, climbing access trails, and other best practices that can aid in the protection of sensitive resources where technical rock and ice climbing are taking place; and

WHEREAS, to ensure protection of natural resources and the wilderness character of the HPWC lands, the HPWC UMP Amendment proposes a phased approach for the implementation of facilities, guided by a Wildland Monitoring Program; and

WHEREAS, the Agency has considered the foregoing recitals, the proposed HPWC UMP Amendment, the July 5, 2018 Memorandum from Kathy Regan to Terry Martino, Agency staff's July 12, 2018 presentation, public comment and Agency staff's responses, and the deliberations of Agency Board Members and Designees at the Agency's July 12-13, 2018 meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act, the Agency finds the proposed HPWC UMP Amendment, dated July 2018 conforms with the APSLMP guidelines and criteria for Wilderness lands; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Agency Board authorizes its Executive Director to advise the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation of the Agency's determination in this matter.

Ayes:
Nays:
Abstentions:
Absent: