



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

GRASS RIVER WILD FOREST

Proposed Final Unit Management Plan

River Area Management Plans

for the

Middle Branch Grass River

and

South Branch Grass River

NYS DEC, REGION 6, DIVISION OF LANDS AND FORESTS

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II. Inventory, Use, and Capacity to Withstand Use

This survey identified the Grass River Unit user as mainly a day user who had visited the area before. Users were predominantly male, in groups of three to four.

Users perceived trash as the major detraction from their enjoyment of the area. The level of use was about right to most respondents. Most of the users surveyed felt that the number of groups seen was what they had expected, and did not detract from their enjoyment at all.

Other Studies

In addition to the 2007 visitor use survey, the Department commissioned the *Draft Northwestern Adirondacks Forest Preserve Visitor Use Study* in 2011. These studies will be revisited and a determination will be made as to whether a more detailed visitor use study is necessary and appropriate.

3. Wildlife

The Grass River Wild Forest parcels are located within Wildlife Management Units (WMU) 6F and 6C. Primary wildlife related usage has historically centered around big game hunting, primarily for deer, although bear hunting, small game hunting and fur-bearer trapping are also prominent. Most of the adjacent easement lands have not been open to public hunting, but public hunting became available in June of 2012 on the Tooley Pond CE, and will become available in 2014 on the Long Pond CE. Public hunting is not allowed on the Grass River, Seveys, or Silver Lake easements, since it was not one of the rights acquired by New York State. There is currently no assessment of non-consumptive wildlife use available for the unit, although the public access provisions now in effect undoubtedly provide some direct or incidental wildlife viewing opportunities to users.

4. Fisheries

Specific quantitative information about angler use of Grass River Wild Forest or even of the Grass River Unit is unavailable. The major trout fishery in the area is the South Branch of the Grass River in the Tooley Pond Forest Preserve tract. Fishing pressure on this type of water is probably in the range of 100-150 angler-hours/acre/year based on data from other areas (NYS DEC Catch Rate Oriented Trout Stocking Policy), mostly in the spring. Fishing on the areas trout ponds can be expected to peak in April, May and June. Church Pond probably has the greatest use among the area trout ponds. Use rates in the range of 6-10 angler-trips/acre/year could reasonably be expected (Gordon 1993, Pfeiffer 1979). Fishing on warm water ponds likely peaks in July and August. Tooley Pond is probably the most used pond of this type on the GRWF. Use of electric but not gas motors is allowed on Tooley Pond.