

Comments Received During Adirondack Park Agency's Comment  
Period Regarding Conformance with the Adirondack Park State  
Land Master Plan.

February 12 to March 19, 2021

**From:** Blake Bellinger <bla19ke@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 18, 2021 3:34 PM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Cc:** Houghton, Josh (DEC)  
**Subject:** Hinckley Lake State Park Expansion

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March 18, 2021

Richard Weber  
Deputy Director of Planning, APA  
P.O. Box 99  
1133 State Route 86  
Ray Brook, NY 12977

Re: DEC's proposed park expansion at Hinckley Lake

Dear Mr. Weber,

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Citizens for Hinckley Lake in regards to the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) proposed expansion of the state park area on Hinckley Lake. The Citizens for Hinckley Lake has a current membership of around 400 people. We also unofficially represent thousands that follow our social media pages. Our membership is made up of lake property owners, business owners on the lake and in the surrounding area, boaters, and others that have a general interest in the lake.

We have received a wide variety of comments and concerns on the current proposed park expansion from our members. As a whole though, our group generally supports the proposed expansion of the state park area with a few revisions. Two of the biggest concerns our members have expressed is the possible loss of the use of "Boaters Beach" and the lack of a boat launch at the proposed park to accommodate all boats, including motor boats.

"Boaters Beach" is a beautiful sandy beach section that borders an area of the proposed park expansion. It is accessed mainly by boaters and is a destination for people to gather, socialize, and enjoy the sandy beach with friends and family. It is a unique area not seen on many lakes and is an attraction to many that boat on Hinckley. The DEC has recently expressed that they would not keep people from continuing to enjoy this beach area, below the high-water mark. This is good news to the thousands that enjoy this area each summer and would be an attraction for people that visit the new expanded state park. In the past, this also has been an area that people hike into and informally camp in the wooded areas. People also ride ATV's down through the trails to the beach and adjacent wooded area. The people camping there often have late night parties and leave garbage and abuse the area. With the park expansion, this abuse of this area would be essentially eliminated. We are pleased to know that "Boaters Beach" will be allowed to continue to be used by the boaters of the lake, and the proposed expansion would eliminate the abuse of the wooded area by people hiking and ATV'ing there.

The DEC's current proposal calls for a boat launch for carry only boats (i.e.-kayaks and canoes). We see this is a

major issue. Currently there is only one boat launch on the lake available to the public on the Route 365 side of the lake. This is owned by the New York Power Authority (NYPA) but managed by an individual hired by NYPA. Hinckley is a fairly large lake and the current public launch is small and lacks adequate access for all people. There is no dock, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, for elderly and the handicapped to get into boats. The parking area is extremely small and during prime summer days, especially weekends and holidays, automobiles and trailers are often backed up onto the road and the parking lot is above max capacity. With the current proposed expansion of the state park at Hinckley, some people would bring boats with them when camping there. These people would have to trailer over to the NYPA launch on the other side of the lake, creating unnecessary traffic on the roads and taking up parking space at the launch that has been used by others in the past. This situation would for sure create even more congestion at the launch and would cause some of the regular users of the lake to have less access. The park expansion is about creating more recreational opportunities, not reduce them. The DEC's proposed park should not make recreational opportunities more difficult in other areas of the lake. The DEC is planning to expand the state park into a beautiful area that will be utilized by many. It does not make sense to not have a full use boat launch for all boats. Hinckley also lacks access to the lake during the spring and fall as the NYPA launch does not generally open until Memorial Day and often closes before the fall. There is a need for spring and fall access to the lake, especially for those that enjoy fishing. The DEC could open their launch up to the public during this time. Hinckley is in need of another boat launch and the state park is a perfect area for this to be done at. The DEC states that the possibility of low water level is a concern for having a motor boat launch. Yet, the area they are proposing a launch is fairly deep and with the current Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)'s re-licensing of the NYPA dam on Hinckley, it is expected that the water will be managed in a much more respectful manner once the license is renewed in 2022.

We see this as a perfect time for the expansion of the park and improved recreational opportunities for the lake with the current FERC re-licensing of the NYPA owned dam on the lake. The Brookfield Power dams just below Hinckley are also connected to the management of Hinckley's water level and their dams are also currently up for re-licensing. During the re-licensing process, FERC must give equal consideration to all uses of the lake including environmental resources and recreational opportunities. We have been very active throughout the re-licensing process and we are confident that there will be a better management of the lake water level that will benefit ALL users of the lake once FERC makes a ruling on the new licenses in the near future. With a new FERC license, NYPA will also have to improve recreational opportunities around the lake. Funding for the park expansion could very well come from NYPA. FERC has taken note of the proposed park expansion and it will help in their ruling for a new license.

As previously stated, we are generally in favor of the proposed expansion of the state park at Hinckley Lake but believe it is necessary to put in a boat launch for all boats, including motor boats. This would be more beneficial for the campground and the local individuals whom have concern with the NYPA launch becoming even more crowded than it already is during peak usage times. The lake is in need of another launch that is accessible for all users, including the elderly and handicapped. We will continue to advocate for this type of launch at the state park throughout the planning period for the expanded facility and through the FERC re-licensing.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me at anytime.

Sincerely,

Blake Bellinger (bla19ke@yahoo.com)  
Citizens for Hinckley Lake  
[www.citizensforhinckley.com](http://www.citizensforhinckley.com)

**From:** Frances Karas <franniekaras@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2021 8:57 PM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** Hinckley Lake Day Use Area Up for Public Comment

*ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.*

Hello,

My name is Frances Karas and my family owns property on South Side Road on Hinckley Lake. I am writing in to provide my thoughts on the proposed DEC new facilities. My family has owned property over the past ten years on Hinckley Lake.

Although the development of the recreation of the lake could provide some benefit, I have some concerns.

In the past few years, there has been a significant increase of underage drinkers - people who will come and disrespect the lake, leaving behind garbage, plastic and glass bottles.

The water levels of the lake can significantly decrease at certain points of the summer boating season - which can make launching and boating very dangerous for those who are novice boaters.

My recommendation would be to incorporate some day-use facilities for recreation - such as kayak, canoe, paddle boat rentals. My recommendation would be to not take out 50 acres of existing trees to build campsites, but rather focus on developing day-use recreation. The lake could benefit from having pavilions, rest rooms and even a snack shop.

Please consider the opinions of those who cherish the preservation of Hinckley Lake.

Please feel free to reach out via e-mail or telephone at (315) 525-6747 if you have any questions.

Thank you,  
Frances Karas

**From:** Gary Shaver <adironack6100@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 21, 2021 9:49 AM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** New Proposed Hinckley Day Use Area Campsites

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To whom it may concern,

I approve the proposed management plan to add all the amenities to the Hinckley State Park.

My reasons in no particular order:

- Creates Jobs
- Great for the local economy especially for the local Restaurants
- Physical Fitness - Improves Health
- Camping is a great chance for everyone to unplug and get away from their screens
- The connection with nature
- Development of life skills
- Educational opportunities
- Camping is beneficial for children and their families because it can help strengthen bonds between family members
- The natural outcome of camping is stress reduction and relaxation like you can't find anywhere else
- Tradition. Some activities are just passed on from generation to generation, and camping is one of them
- Its inexpensive, Gives more opportunity for people with lower incomes to be able to vacation
- Adds an additional boat launch to Hinckley
- The Day Use Park already exists

I believe the pros by far outway the cons.

Thank you,

Gary Shaver  
914 State Route 365  
Remsen NY 13438



**From:** Jennifer Holman <jlaponic@frontiernet.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 09, 2021 8:03 PM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** Hinckley comments

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Hello! I am submitting comments for consideration.

To whom it may concern:

I do not see a need for campsites, especially when there is a campground across the lake. If campsites are decided, what is written in the plan is excessive - 150 sites up to a 40 foot RV is ridiculous. I think such an addition will ruin the quiet, natural appeal of Hinckley. Please don't put that many campsites there. I would like to see the trail system of 4.2 miles or even a walking path around the lake offered. It's the only reservoir property without a walking path. A walking /biking path, restrooms, boat launch, and pavilion would be ideal. I would also like to see dog friendly options for pet owners. Please choose the walking path, biking path, restrooms, and pavilion and reconsider the campsite development to something smaller.

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Jennifer L. Holman

**From:** John@speedwaypress.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2021 12:09 PM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** Hinckley Day Use Area campsites, public comment

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Please do this plan. Right now its first come set up for days/ weeks or the summer or just bully anyone if you want to take over. Its crazy and people are getting out of control with threats and unsafe use of ATV and jet skis. Worse many are taking over areas like the own it for the whole season.

John M. Henry

1 Burkle Street  
Oswego NY 13126  
315-343-3531



**From:** jsanderl@ntcnet.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 18, 2021 9:25 PM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** DEC plan for expanding Hinckley Lake Day Use Area

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Richard Weber

Deputy Director of Planning for the APA,

I am writing to provide comments on the proposed expansion of the Hinckley Lake Day Use Area. I am a longtime resident of the Town of Russia and live year round on Hinckley Lake. Before I became a full time resident, I spent summers at a family camp on the lake. I am rooted here and care deeply about the area and the survival of it's natural resources. The area has much to offer and I understand why the DEC believes expanding the Day Use Area to include camping is a good idea. I do have some significant concerns about their proposal and would like them to be considered before the project is authorized. Once authorization is granted, it can't be undone. I sent comments to the DEC during their comment periods. I understand that they must receive authorization from the APA to continue so I want to highlight some of my main concerns for you.

1. Grant is a very small town. Most access to the proposed camping facility will be through Grant. I believe there will be a significant increase in traffic through the town and it is not designed to handle it. I know the DEC says this impact will be negligible but I don't see how that could be true. Adding 150 campsites, some of which can handle 40 foot RV's will have a huge impact. Additionally, this campground is on a lake. Many campers will be bringing boats to use during their stays. The boat launch for motorboats is on the other side of the lake. Campers will have to go to launch and pick up their boats. Their trailers are going to be kept on the campground. Each trip adds traffic from potentially large, heavy, and loud vehicles. This doesn't even address where the boats will be kept overnight when campers are staying for multiple days. I don't see how this can be alleviated.

2. Introduction of Invasive Species I have **great** concern about the increased risk of invasive species because of the campground. I think many campers will come from further away than day use people do. They may also have visited other places. Campers bring more risks. It isn't just firewood! Invasive species can be hijackers on vehicles, boats, recreational vehicles, etc. The construction phase of this project alone will increase risks. Construction equipment is seldom thoroughly cleaned between jobs if it is ever cleaned. Japanese knotweed is just one nasty invasive getting established here when culverts are cleaned and repaired, and when road shoulders are cleared etc. The machines go from one job to another spreading it. Prevention of introduction of invasive species requires constant awareness and effort. It is very difficult to eradicate them once established and they are incredibly disruptive to native natural systems.

3. Light and Noise Pollution It is my hope that the DEC will be particularly sensitive to the impact of the proposed campground on light pollution on the lake. I expressed to them that one of my major concerns for this involves the planned construction of a pavilion on Price's Point. Price's Point is a very scenic spot on the lake and can be seen from much of the property on the lake. Light from there is particularly glaring and disruptive to the nighttime views. I do not see why the pavilion has to be out on the point. Any light from there or noise from there will have an impact on many other parts of the lake. If they need a pavilion for that loop it could be back from the elevated point where it will have less impact and could be surrounded some vegetation screening. Light and noise pollution are increasing on the lake, especially in recent years. They both have a significant negative impacts.

4. Negative Impacts on Wildlife Bald Eagles and Osprey fish, hunt, and nest around the lake. They often hunt from the peak at Price's Point and on the ridge where the hand carry boat launch is going to be. I have watched a mature pair of eagles try to teach an immature eagle to fish there. One of the adults wounded a fish and left it flapping in the water. The adults chattered and demonstrated for almost 15 minutes while apparently coaxing their young one to take it. Otter, Beaver, Fisher, muskrat, and mink live in and around the water of the lake and it's

tributaries. Loons sing in the mornings and evenings. I know Hinckley is not a natural lake but it is full life and that life is affected by changes on the lake. These impacts should not be minimized because there is a dam on the lake. This past year there were thousands and thousands of fresh water mussels left to dry out and die or be eaten on the shores when they irresponsibly drained the water out of the lake. Think of the impact of those mussels on water quality and on other organisms. I had been following the Jarvis FERC relicensing through NYPA. I read their biological information in the final application. They said that there was no evidence of mussels in the lake. I had been throwing them back in the water for weeks by the hundreds! I called the DEC fisheries department and told them about them. They sent a team to come and verify that they were there. They are there, in large numbers, natural lake or not. Impacts on these organisms and the system as a whole should not be minimized or ignored. Typical Adirondack wildlife abound on Hinckley Lake.

5. Increase in boat traffic. I believe expansion of the day use area to include 150 campsites will greatly increase boat traffic on an already busy lake. Will there be a law enforcement presence on the lake? Currently there is almost never any Sheriff, State Police, or Conservation Officer on the lake. This is a very dangerous situation which will only get worse with increased traffic. There is an expression here that there is no law north of Cold Brook. There is quite a bit of truth to this. Things that go on in Hinckley would not be allowed to occur in other places in the Adirondack Park.

I know that a DEC goal is to manage recreation programs to ensure protection of the natural resource base according to Environmental Conservation Law. I'm sure this is what they are attempting to do with the expansion of the day use area. They say in their plan that "there are no adverse environmental impacts that cannot be avoided adequately or mitigated if the proposed action is implemented." I'm not convinced of that yet. I hope that having to get it approved by the APA will help to ensure that it is true.

I think it is relevant that the Jarvis FERC relicensing is occurring at the same time that the DEC is proposing to expand the day use area. It should be able to allow for outcomes that benefit Hinckley Lake as a 'natural system' as well providing for all the other uses this water source contributes to, of which there are many. Currently there are even discrepancies in the plans released by the DEC and NYPA about the low water point for the boat launch on Rte. 365. The DEC plan says that NYPA says the boat launch will be lengthened so it can close when the water level is 1206 than the current 1210. The NYPA FERC renewal says it will lengthen from 1210 to 1208. This is a big discrepancy.

The NYPA Jarvis relicensing team essentially drew a boundary line around the shoreline of the lake for their studies and totally ignored the impacts on the tributaries. How can you study the impacts of fluctuating water levels on Hinckley if you don't look at what is happening in the West Canada Creek above and below the lake and the Black Creek? I paddle the Black Creek almost everyday during paddling season. I can assure anyone that the constant and often dramatic fluctuations in water level have significant impacts on the natural populations that call the tributaries home and consequently the natural populations that call the lake home. Bank beaver flooded out or high and dry. Loon and Goose eggs also flooded out or high and dry. Fish and amphibian eggs drying in the sun and on and on. How can they be granted another 40 year lease? Why should they be granted a new 40 year lease? They are not planning to do a better job of managing water. They want to do just what they're currently doing. Why can't the State and it's agencies establish reasonable guidelines for water management of a body of water within it's boundaries? Tell the power companies the way it is going to be if they want a lease. Take it or leave it. I know it isn't that simple but the system we have now certainly doesn't protect the bodies of water or the people of the State of New York.

I appreciate the opportunity to have input into this decision. There is a great deal to consider when you think about the impacts of such a large project. If you have any questions about the points I'm trying to make feel free to contact me at 315-826-5794 or through email. Thank you for your efforts on this project and your continued commitment to preserving our Adirondacks for current and future generations.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Sanderl Owens

**From:** Michael Gray <klmngray@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 18, 2021 2:37 PM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** Hinckley Park Expansion Comments

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Attn. Richard Weber,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide input for this plan. We live at our camp on Topper Road during the summer. Our camp is close to the Hinckley Day Use Area (HDUA). I am not opposed to an expansion of the park, but I have concerns I would like to express as you carefully consider how best to expand the park.

When we sit on our porch at night and look across at Price's Point we watch the night sky, look at the stars and listen to the loons. Price's Point can be seen from many of the homes around the lake. The exceptions to the darkness on the point come from illegal camping, fires and ATV use on the beach. I am concerned that a pavilion on Price's Point will create light pollution. Will it be lit during the night? If so, will the lights be dimmed and pointed down? Could the pavilion be located in another part of the park instead? I would like to know more about the plans for the proposed pavilion at Price's Beach.

I am pleased that the launch at HDUA will be a hand carry launch only since NYPA already manages a launch on Route 365. It makes sense to extend and improve that launch rather than build a new one on an already heavily used part of the lake. A launch at HDUA would increase vehicle and boat traffic in and around the park.

I am not sure if you are aware that the information regarding the boat launch on Route 365 in the Jarvis FERC relicensing application predicts that their launch will get *less* future use and therefore they are not planning improvements to parking etc. I would expect use of the motorboat launch on Route 365 to increase significantly. Many of the campers using HDUA will be bringing boats.

The NYPA Jarvis Relicensing Team contracted a study for the FERC relicensing process. One problem with the study was that it studied just the boundaries of the lake. They ignored the tributaries to Hinckley Reservoir. They did not study the Black Creek, the West Canada Creek, or the area below Hinckley Dam. The study said that there were no fish spawning in the lake. Even if I believed that, what about the tributaries? The FERC study also said there were no fresh-water mussels in the lake. Last year when the water level went down thousands and thousands of fresh-water mussels died and were scavenged when they were left high and dry. I took pictures of the mussels that I would be happy to share. It is obvious in the pictures that the mussels were all over the HDUA side of the lake, including the area for the hand carry launch, the beaches and the mouth of the Black Creek. We even found some on the island and at the boat launch on Route 365.

The FERC study also claimed that there were no bald eagles nesting on the lake. That is just not true. We often see the eagles soaring above the lake. We have seen them hunting fish right near the proposed hand carry launch. I know people who have seen at least one nest on the lake and they have told me the location of it.

I believe most boats currently using the lake are boats that either stay on the lake or are launched and used by people who primarily boat on Hinckley Lake. Adding the campground will bring boats to the lake that travel from lake to lake. Invasive species such as zebra mussels and Eurasian milfoil are a concern. The HDUA plan addresses invasive species, with the exception of species being transported by boat. Is there a plan for a boat wash station on the lake and will it be mandatory to use it when launching boats?

Japanese knotweed is another invasive species that is already getting established in spots along the lakeshore. It has been transported by road equipment from one area to another. I hope great care will be taken not to spread Japanese knotweed when

doing construction for the park expansion.

You are allocating spaces for trailers at HDUA because campers with boats will be using the launch on Route 365. What is the plan for where the boats will be kept at night and when they are not in use? Will they just be pulled up and left on the beach? People use Price's Beach to swim. Will boats be put in and out on a daily basis and trailered when not in use? Is there another plan?

How many campsites will accommodate 40' RVs? They are large vehicles to be traveling the roads in the park, through the tiny town of Grant and the surrounding communities.

The intended uses for Price's Beach have not been specified in the plan. What will be allowed there? Will the beach itself be reserved for the exclusive use of campers staying at the park?

What will the park rules be? What is the projected staff to monitor and control activities at the expanded park? Will there be a police or DEC presence on the lake monitoring boats?

Thank you,  
Kathleen and Michael Gray

**From:** Michele Enright <milishell@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:20 AM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** Problem with your plan

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I live on Stormy Hill rd and traffic during the summer is already unnerving. There are times I am afraid to even go to my mailbox. Speeding Atv's in summer and snowmobiles in the winter make it impossible to get out of our driveway. I also have concerns with water levels that continually recede all summer long. I have lived here since 1981 but the problem continues to worsen each year. This should be addressed before you increase traffic a hundred fold with your plan.

Feel free to contact me or come visit the traffic issues that exist even as I type this Thank you Michele Enright  
126 Stormy Hill Rd  
Coldbrook, New York  
13324  
315 8267909

Sent from my iPad

**From:** Michelle Hondusky <mhondusky1@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 6:25 AM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** Day use Hinckley Lake

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To whom it may concern,

I fail to understand how this will be helpful. The issue we homeowners on the lake see, would be lack of restrooms, lack of DEC policing and water levels. I fail to understand how enlarging an area you already have problems with is helpful. You have a care taker on site and this is not helpful. But you want to enlarge the problem. Put in some restrooms , add litter baskets and increase patrol. Stop mismanaging this lake !

Sent from my iPad. Sincerely

Michelle Hondusky

**From:** shawn fleming <jetelectric@live.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:31 AM  
**To:** SLMP\_Comments@apa.ny.gov  
**Subject:** Camp grounds in Hinkley

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Hi, All for upgrading the day use grounds on Hinkley matter of fact its overdue. The issue I see is the DEC needs to talk to the Poland Joint Fire District and Kuyahoorra Valley Ambulance and find out what their needs would be to safely handle the expected increase in visitors in the area. Corporation between the agencies would go a long way for the safety and success of the new recreational area.

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