



New York State  
Adirondack  
Park Agency

KATHY HOCHUL  
Governor

BARBARA RICE  
Executive Director

## **STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT FINDINGS STATEMENT AND ADIRONDACK PARK STATE LAND MASTER PLAN DECISION FOR THE 2023-24 STATE LAND CLASSIFICATION PACKAGE**

1. The Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP), adopted pursuant to the Adirondack Park Agency Act (Executive Law, Article 27), requires the classification of newly acquired state lands within the Adirondack Park according to their characteristics and capacity to withstand use.
2. The classification and reclassification of state lands amends the APSLMP, and APSLMP amendments must be approved by the Governor upon a recommendation by the Adirondack Park Agency (Agency) that is made in consultation with the Department of Environmental Conservation (Department).
3. The Department acquired approximately 5,800 acres of land within the Adirondack Park in Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, St. Lawrence, and Warren counties, which require classification pursuant to the APSLMP.
4. The proposed classification and reclassification package contains eight reclassification proposals that reclassify lands from a more restrictive to a less restrictive land use category. Five of those reclassifications reflect mapping errors and/or boundary clarifications involving the Golden Beach Intensive Use Area and the Rollins Pond Intensive Use Area. The Agency also proposes the reclassification of three parcels from Wild Forest to State Administrative to reflect historic and ongoing uses of these parcels. All eight reclassifications are addressed in detail in the Draft and Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statements.
5. A Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) on the proposed classification and reclassification package was accepted by the Adirondack Park Agency on October 12, 2023 pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), 6 NYCRR Part 617, and Agency regulations at 9 NYCRR Part 586.
6. Between November 1 and November 13, 2023 the Agency held three public hearings pursuant to SEQRA and the APSLMP in Ray Brook, Albany, as well as a virtual option.

7. The Agency accepted public comment on the DSEIS from October 12, 2023 through November 27, 2023 and held public hearings pursuant to SEQRA and the APSLMP in Ray Brook, Albany, as well as a virtual option.
8. The Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) was presented to and accepted by the Adirondack Park Agency Board on January 11, 2024 pursuant to the SEQRA and Agency regulations.
9. By resolution dated January 11, 2024, the Agency directed the Executive Director to issue a SEQRA Findings Statement and APSLMP Decision for the proposed classification package in conformance with the resolution and after expiration of the ten calendar day period provided for public review of the FSEIS by 6 NYCRR § 617.11(a).
10. Notice of completion and acceptance of the FSEIS was published in the Environmental Notice Bulletin on January 17, 2024 and the ten calendar day period provided by 6 NYCRR § 617.11(a) has expired.

Now, therefore, in accordance with the Agency's January 11, 2024 resolution:

- I. Pursuant to SEQRA the Agency makes the following findings regarding the proposed 2023-24 state land classification package:
  - a. The Agency has considered all of the relevant environmental impacts, facts and conclusions disclosed in the FSEIS; and
  - b. The Agency has weighed and balanced the relevant environmental impacts of the proposed action, including the impacts of the proposed action on the physical and biological resources, area character and landscape quality, unavoidable adverse environmental effects, effects on the use and conservation of energy resources, irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources, growth inducing aspects, economics impacts, and climate change impacts; and
  - c. The classification and reclassification proposals contained in the package apply the guidelines of the APSLMP to protect sensitive ecological resources and intangible values such as remoteness, and prevent significant adverse environmental impacts associated with types of use. The guidelines vary from one classification to another and may prescribe the types of recreational opportunities available in conformance with the APSLMP's unifying theme that "the protection and preservation of the natural resources of the state lands within the Park must be paramount. Human use and enjoyment of those lands should be permitted and encouraged, so long as the resources in their physical and biological context as well as their social or psychological aspects are not degraded" (APSLMP, p. 1). In addition, all of the lands described in this package are afforded protection pursuant to Article XIV of the New York State Constitution

and the New York State Freshwater Wetlands Act (Environmental Conservation Law Article 24); and

- d. The Agency has met the procedural and substantive requirements of 6 NYCRR Part 617, including, but not limited to: (i) the development of a DSEIS for the proposed reclassification of land from a more restrictive to a less restrictive classification; (ii) the holding of hearings and provision of a public comment period on the DSEIS; and (iii) the preparation of a FSEIS that responds to the public comments provided on the DSEIS; and
  - e. Consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations, from among the reasonable alternatives available, the proposed classifications and reclassifications described in the package will avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable.
- II. Pursuant to the APSLMP the Agency determines that the actions proposed in the 2023-24 state land classification package will classify and reclassify those lands according to their characteristics and capacity to withstand use based on the criteria set forth in the APSLMP, including physical characteristics, biological considerations, intangible considerations and established facilities, and recommends the proposed package for approval by the Governor.

This Findings Statement and Decision is issued and effective on January 30, 2024.

*Barbara Rice*

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Executive Director