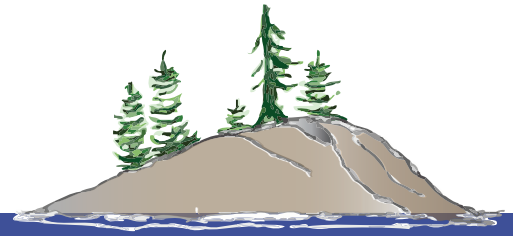


Upper Saranac Foundation

It still is, and always will be, about Water Quality.



P.O. Box 564
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

www.usfoundation.net

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September 10, 2023

Megan Phillips, Deputy Director Planning
Adirondack Park Agency
P.O. Box 99, Ray Brook, NY 12977
(via electronic submission)

RE: SLMP compliance for the proposed Rollins Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan

I am the President of the Upper Saranac Foundation (USF) and I am writing to you to comment on the proposed NYDEC Draft Unit Management Plan for the Rollins Pond Public Campground.

As background, the USF is a nonprofit, science guided advocacy organization addressing priority threats that jeopardize the natural character, environmental quality, and recreational enjoyment of the Upper Saranac watershed. The USF has a long history of natural resource stewardship and advocacy for the protection of the Adirondacks and the Saranac watershed which includes the Rollins Pond Campground.

While the USF appreciates the time and efforts that the NYSDEC is putting into the preparation of the Draft Management Plan, the USF is not seeing the incorporation of certain basic elements which are required for Unit Management Plans (UMPs) as stated in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP).

Specifically, The Master Plan states: "A comprehensive study of Adirondack lakes and ponds should be conducted by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to determine each water body's capacity to withstand various uses, particularly motorized uses and to maintain and enhance its biological, natural and aesthetic qualities." (p 4).

Further, the Master Plan requires that every UMP "contain . . . an assessment of the physical, biological and social carrying capacity of the area with particular attention to portions of the area threatened by overuse." (p 10-11).

The USF feels this study needs to be completed by the DEC prior to approval of compliance by the APA. Based on the analysis of carrying capacity, the UMP must include "the regulation or limitation of public use such that the carrying capacity of the area is not exceeded . . ." (p 10-11).

While the proposed Plan begins to address the social, biological, and physical infrastructure capacity of its on-ground facility, it lacks insight specific to the campgrounds water resources.

To be specific, an *“assessment of the impact of actual and projected public use on the resources, ecosystems and public enjoyment of the area with particular attention to portions of the area threatened by overuse”* (p 10) for water-based use is completely absent. The proposed Rollins Pond UMP fails to evaluate or assess the campground influences on the waterbody it surrounds and ignores any impact on neighboring waterbodies.

Within the UMP there is a proposal to improve the Rollins Pond Boat launch for better accessibility. These improvements, unfortunately, should not be permitted without a full assessment of the waterbody’s carrying capacity.

Another problem is that while the SLMP talks about the dangers of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), the proposed UMP lacks any specific preventive strategies within the Rollins Pond Campground to thwart the spread of aquatic invasive species.

In order for the UMP to comply with the SLMP, there must be *“actions to minimize adverse impacts on the resources of the area”* and *“preservation of aquatic and terrestrial habitats”* (P11).

The nearest Watercraft Inspection Steward from the Rollins Pond boat launch is at Fish Creek Campground, nearly three miles away and the nearest decontamination unit over eight miles away. The USF feels the Fish Creek and Rollins Pond Campgrounds should be a model for reducing AIS spread, thus providing a regional wide benefit. There is no better opportunity than a gated, secure entrance with management of over 600 campsites to inform campers about AIS and the associated risks. It is also a perfect location for an AIS inspection and decontamination station. A decontamination station located at Fish Creek/Rollins Pond would greatly prevent AIS from entering the watershed but also would limit the spread of AIS to all waterbodies in NYS.

The Foundation has commented before on a series of UMP’s. We have consistently asked for UMP emphasis on carrying capacity studies and on strong AIS prevention. Unless the recommendations in UMP’s are actually acted on and, implemented, these plans remain just words on a page.

The USF has a long history of advocating for the protection of the watershed for the benefit of its users, landowners, and visitors. This includes the purchasing, refurbishing, and maintenance of the Bartlett Carry Dam, assuring consistent water levels of the Upper Saranac watershed including the waters of the campgrounds. What has been most costly to the USF is the prevention and ongoing maintenance of AIS. To date, the USF has spent over 3.5 million dollars on AIS control and harvesting, on the Watershed Stewardship Program and an AIS decontamination unit on USL.

The Upper Saranac Foundation Board feels strongly that until relevant carrying capacity and AIS spread prevention measures are addressed in the proposed Rollins Pond UMP, that the plan lacks key components that would assure the protection of the state’s resources.

The USF encourages the Adirondack Park Agency Board Members and Designees to require the NYSDEC to address the above concerns and conform to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan prior to the plan’s approval.

Thank you for reviewing the Upper Saranac Foundations comments.

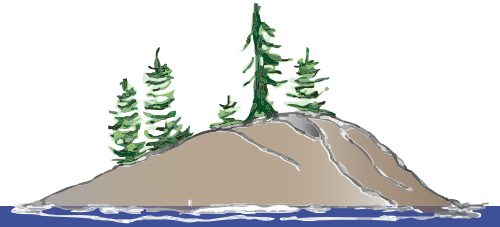
Sincerely,



Tom Swayne
President, Upper Saranac Foundation PO Box 564
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

Upper Saranac Foundation

It still is, and always will be, about Water Quality.



September 10, 2023

P.O. Box 564
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

www.usfoundation.net

Josh Houghton, EPS2 (NR)
NYS DEC Bureau of Recreation
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-5253
(via electronic submission)

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RE: Rollins Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan

On behalf of the Upper Saranac Foundation, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer the following comments on the Rollins Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan (UMP).

The Upper Saranac Foundation (USF) appreciates the time and efforts that the NYSDEC has put into the preparation of the UMP. The Department's goals and the criteria established in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan will ensure the protection of the natural resources and vitality of the Saranac Watershed.

Given that the Rollins Pond Campground is one of the most popular campgrounds in the Adirondacks, it is apparent that visitors are attracted to the natural beauty of the Watershed. Key attributes of the Campground include pristine waters, recreational access to miles of open water in the Saranac Lake Wild Forest, and access to the 5,000-acre Upper Saranac Lake (USL).

The USF has a long history of advocating for the protection the watershed for the benefit of its users, land owners, and visitors. This includes the purchasing, refurbishing and the maintenance of the Bartlett Carry Dam. The Foundation's maintenance of the Dam ensures the consistent water levels of the Watershed. Consistent water levels mean continued recreation to the areas many visitors and to ongoing water quality.

One of the greatest threats to Rollins Pond Campground and the watershed are Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). To combat AIS the Upper Saranac Foundation (USF) has spent over 3.5 million dollars on AIS management, on the Watershed Stewardship Program, and for an AIS Decontamination Unit on USL.

The Foundation also has a long history of partnering with the NYSDEC for the betterment of the watershed. The USF has expanded AIS management and harvesting efforts to include waterbodies entirely within Forest Preserve, including Fish Creek Campground.

The USF Board supports and encourages proposals in the draft of the Unit Management Plan that are protective of the watershed. In particular, the USF supports the planting of trees and shrubs and the restoration of overused and eroded campsites. The USF agrees that this restoration should include, rotating campsite use, replacing lost soils, regrading sites, improving drainage at these sites, and finally taking steps to assure shoreline stabilization.

While these improvements are excellent and important, the USP would like to suggest more to ensure protection of the natural resources. The USF's suggested enhancements to the proposed UMP are:

Carrying Capacity: All DEC campground facilities should be operated within the physical, biological and social carrying capacity of the site, as required by the SLMP. Unfortunately, any waterbody carrying capacity information is absent from the proposed UMP.

The Master Plan states: *"A comprehensive study of Adirondack lakes and ponds should be conducted by the Department of Environmental Conservation to determine each water body's capacity to withstand various uses, particularly motorized uses and to maintain and enhance its biological, natural and aesthetic qualities."* (p 4). The Master Plan requires that every UMP "contain . . . an assessment of the physical, biological and social carrying capacity of the area with particular attention to portions of the area threatened by overuse." (p 10-11). Based on the analysis of carrying capacity, the UMP must include *"the regulation or limitation of public use such that the carrying capacity of the area is not exceeded . . ."* (p 10-11).

The USF feels strongly that any proposed management actions that include enlargement or improvement to the Rollins Pond Boat launch for better accessibility for motorized watercraft requires an assessment of the waterbody's carrying capacity.

Finally, the UMP needs to evaluate and assess the campground effects on the waterbody it encompasses, as well as its impact on neighboring waterbodies.

Invasive Species: The SLMP emphasizes that the *"growth of invasive species cause the loss of biodiversity, interruption of normal hydrology, suppression of native vegetation, and significant aesthetic, human safety and economic impacts"* (P 12).

Despite this concern, the proposed management actions fail to elaborate on specific preventive strategies within the campground to thwart the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). The UMP, in compliance with the SLMP, must provide *"actions to minimize adverse impacts on the resources of the area"* and *"preservation of aquatic and terrestrial habitats"* (P11).

Without AIS preventative measures in the UMP, invasive species become a real threat to recreation and tourism.

In 2014, the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) commissioned a report by *Yellow Wood Associates* on the economic impacts of 8 Invasive Species on the Adirondack Region. If allowed to establish and spread, the report estimated losses of \$48-\$53 million annually with total long-term impacts of \$468-\$893 million. The popularity and ongoing visitation to Rollins Pond Campground is directly dependent on clean, clear, and invasive free water.

The UMP should also align with actions that are consistent with the NYSDECs - **New York State Invasive Species Comprehensive Management Plan, the Adirondack Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management, Invasive Species Strategic Plan, and the 2023 Inter-Agency Guidelines for Implementing Best Management Practices to Control Invasive Species on DEC-Administered Lands of the Adirondack Park.**

These plans outline the importance of AIS management, the need for early detection, for protecting native ecological communities, and for public education.

Watershed Stewards performing AIS inspections at the Fish Creek Campground launch don't have the resources to decontaminate boats that do not meet the Clean, Drain, Dry standard set by the NYSDEC for watercraft entering the campgrounds. The Plan needs a strategy to better address AIS spread through Watershed Stewards and decontamination to coincide with priorities established in the SLMP.

In conclusion, the Upper Saranac Foundation supports the DEC's plans to update and improve facilities as proposed in the Rollins Pond Campground UMP.

Having said this, the USF strongly encourages the NYSDEC to clarify and address the biological and aquatic carrying capacities of the campground to ensure proper assessment and management, which are legally required in the SLMP.

The DEC should clearly outline how it will achieve these requirements, including Conditions of Desired Outcomes. Inventories of actual and projected use and the assessment of carrying capacity are not only essential in meeting the legal requirement of the SLMP, but are necessary to protect the natural resources in and around the Rollins Pond Campground.

In addition, the management actions of the Rollins Pond Plan need to better address and elaborate on prevention strategies to thwart the spread of AIS. The USF strongly supports the construction of a boat washing station at the entrance to the campgrounds to actively monitor and manage aquatic invasive species for watercraft entering both Rollins and Fish Creek Campgrounds. Because the waters of the region are highly interconnected, it is crucial that the DEC work diligently to prevent and manage the spread of aquatic invasive species. There is no better opportunity to do this than a gated entrance that accesses over 600 campsites.

The USF hopes the development and implementation of the Rollins Pond Campground UMP will provide an opportunity for the USF and the DEC to collaboratively work together for the benefit of the watershed. The joint goal of this partnership is to continue to improve and protect the water quality and environmental beauty of the Upper Saranac watershed.

Thank you for reviewing the Upper Saranac Foundations comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Swayne", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Swayne
President, Upper Saranac Foundation
PO Box 564
Saranac Lake, NY 12983



September 18, 2023

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Megan Phillips
Adirondack Park Agency
P.O. Box 99
Ray Brook, NY 12977

Josh Houghton
NYS DEC Bureau of
Recreation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-5253

(via electronic transmission)

Re: Draft Rollins Pond Campground and Day-Use Area UMP

Dear Deputy Director of Planning Megan Phillips and Natural Resource Planner Josh Houghton,

The Adirondack Council thanks the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) for the opportunity to comment on the Rollins Pond Draft Unit Management Plan (UMP) during this joint public comment period. The Adirondack Park is unique and irreplaceable, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure its protection and sustainable levels of use for current and future generations.

Unit Management Plans are a unique opportunity to create frameworks for the management of a unit's natural resources based on biological, physical and social characteristics, their carrying capacities, equitable access to resources, as well as imminent threats such as climate change. Climate impacts are inevitable, yet the plan does not consider climate in relation to wetlands impacts, carrying capacity of lakes, or forest management. The Council continues to urge APA and DEC to assess how their actions, as required by the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, support or hinder the state's climate goals. While the UMP makes mention of invasive species, it does not address a forest management plan to protect patches of mature trees and old growth trees (e.g., balsam flats portion of Deer Pond Marsh), and proactive management for invasive species.

Therefore, we would like to emphasize the following environmental considerations:

- **Corrections and Reclassifications:** In reviewing the draft UMP, we could not locate any numbers for the proposed reclassifications for Intensive Use and Wild Forest for the campground. While this was likely an oversight, the exclusion of this information decreases transparency and the efficacy of public review and comment. According to the 2023 classification package presented at the August 2023 APA meeting, APA and DEC are proposing to reclassify 89.7 acres from

Wild Forest to Intensive Use and only 74.4 acres from Intensive Use to Wild Forest. The Council would like to see a more robust addition to Saranac Lakes Wild Forest as the re-classification of Wild Forest land to Intensive Use is not an insignificant action. There is a lack of effort to protect the 13 acres of palustrine wetlands present, which could potentially be safeguarded by adjusting the Intensive Use boundary closer to the eastern shore of Rollins Pond. While future repairs and projects regarding infrastructure are important to buffer, this buffer is in excess of what is needed.

Past land reclassifications have followed a precedent of achieving a two-to-one or greater ratio of adding more strongly protected lands to the Forest Preserve. The Council continues to advocate that any land re-classifications have a net positive gain for wild spaces. If developments exist, the Council believes that pre-existing infrastructure should not hinder the opportunity for land restoration to a natural state.

- Carrying Capacity of Rollins & Whey Ponds: The draft UMP is devoid of any assessment of the carrying capacity of either Rollins and Whey Ponds, despite increasing recreator levels since 2020. We continue to remind APA & DEC states that “A genuine need exists to insure that the scale and intensity of water-oriented uses are consistent with uses of adjoining state and private lands and the general character of the Park, particularly so far as the type, speed and number of boats are concerned.” An effort to get at this important resource management question would be welcomed, and partners are ready to help.
- Biodiversity Protection: Rollins Pond, Whey Pond and surrounding areas provide habitat for a wide range of northern hardwood and low-land boreal plant and animal species, including several that are threatened or endangered. The UMP should prioritize strategies to protect and enhance biodiversity by preserving critical habitats, creating buffer zones, and preventing the spread of invasives. In the *Wildlife* section of the UMP, the plan should not merely refer to the Saranac Lakes Wild Forest UMP for wildlife and fisheries information but should instead perform its own biological and natural resource inventory in order to prioritize protection of natural resources within the unit as DEC is tasked to “conserve, improve and protect New York’s natural resources and environment,” not the campgrounds.
- Water Quality: Rollins and Whey Ponds are vital pieces of the Adirondack Park’s water resources and the Council applauds the implementation of watercraft inspection stewards. The Council also supports improvements to plantings and waste/wastewater facilities in order to prevent sewage, pollutants, and other waste from entering into water resources in and adjacent to the Rollins Pond unit. However, the Council urges the inclusion of a boat wash station or boat washing enforcement at Rollins Pond Campground. Given the perfect storm of increasing levels of use at the campground (jumping by ~10,000 people from 2019 to 2022) and that both Rollins Pond and Whey Pond are free of invasives, a boat wash station is needed to help prevent the spread of invasive species into these waterbodies. While Fish Creek has a boat wash, motorized boaters are unlikely to drive to the other campground before putting boats into Rollins Pond. As such, there should be enforcement of the Aquatic Invasive Species Transport Law regulations by requiring self-certified and non-motorized boaters to either wash boats at Fish Creek before check-in or to hand wash before boating.
- Wetlands: Wetlands play a critical ecological role as well as a climatic one. The UMP should include measures to safeguard the palustrine and other wetlands present in and adjacent to the unit, prevent their degradation, and promote their restoration where necessary. The Saranac Lake Wild

Forest boundary should be expanded westward to protect the palustrine wetlands present to the east of the active campground area.

- Equitable Camping Opportunities: Camping is a core aspect of the Adirondack experience, and the UMP should support responsible outdoor activities while ensuring that the park's ecological integrity is maintained. The draft UMP proposes making extended camping permits available to the public at this campground, rather than limiting stays to 14-days. The Council does not support extending permits beyond 14-days. We echo concerns voiced by Commissioner Benita Law-Diao and Commissioner Art Lussi that camping should be an opportunity for all, not for a few. Improving campground protocol on monitoring this and other forms of campsite poaching will be crucial to approaching the issue equitably. In addition, the DEC may consider requesting that ReserveAmerica open some campsites only 7-10 days in advance to allow for a more flexible and inclusive reservation system.
- Minimizing Visual Impacts: The Council applauds the UMP's minimization of the visual impact of infrastructure and developments such as the WiFi improvements and utility lines. It's understood that the DEC will bury lines whenever possible, and we urge that there must be no impacts to wetlands during directional boring 8-10 feet below grade.

Overall, the draft UMP must bolster its inventory of natural resources, address aquatic and terrestrial carrying capacity, and provide stronger management protections for wetlands. In the midst of a climate crisis, we cannot afford to pass due diligence on and must accurately assess and provide management actions for the protection of the Park's natural resources. The Council thanks the agencies for the opportunity for comment and looks forward to the inclusion of these concerns in the final management plan.

Sincerely,



Jackie Bowen
Director of Conservation



Jess Grant
Conservation Associate



Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP)

(518) 576-2082 . PO Box 65 . Keene Valley, NY . 12943
www.adkinvasives.com

September 13, 2023

Dear NYS APA and NYS DEC,

Thank you for inviting comments on the Rollins Pond Campground Unit Management Plan (Rollins Pond UMP). The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP), hosted by The Nature Conservancy, is pleased to submit these comments on the Rollins Pond UMP.

APIPP has worked with the Adirondack Park Agency (Agency) and Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) for more than twenty years on the prevention and management of aquatic invasive species (AIS). While 75% of the Adirondack waterbodies we have studied remain free of AIS, threats are increasing from climate change and human activities. Carefully crafted UMPs can effectively address the threats to our aquatic ecosystems, and we offer the following recommendations for the Rollins Pond UMP.

Boat Decontamination Station

Our latest surveys show Rollins Pond is not yet invaded with AIS. As an AIS-free lake, this waterbody should have the highest degree of protection from invasive species invasion. The Rollins Pond UMP includes boat launch improvements. Improved launch capacity at Rollins Pond increases the AIS risk to Adirondack waters given the potential for an average of 53,000 visitors a year to bring boats to Rollins Pond from other waterbodies.

Convenient access to a boat decontamination station is the best way to prevent the spread of invasive species. It is unrealistic to assume boaters will make the trip to Upper Saranac Lake to use the decontamination station there before setting up camp at Rollins Pond. The Rollins Pond UMP presents an opportunity for New York State to lead in AIS spread-prevention when upgrading boat launches by including a decontamination unit at the upgraded Rollins Pond launch.

Carrying Capacity

The State Land Use Master Plan specifies that fishing and waterway access can be provided if specific guidelines are followed. These guidelines include that the physical, biological and social carrying capacity of the waterbodies accessible from the site will not be exceeded and that there will be no adverse impacts on the physical, biological or scenic resources of the waterbody and surrounding land.

A UMP such as the one for Rollins Pond should include an assessment of a waterbody's physical and biological capacity to withstand the threat of aquatic invasive species (e.g., temperature, chemical composition, bottom substrate) resulting from the proposed human activities. Rollins Pond, as an AIS-free lake, warrants a carrying capacity assessment prior to approval of the UMP in order to protect this waterbody from adverse impacts.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammara Van Ryn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tammara Van Ryn
APIPP Program Director

From: [Michael Aikens](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Attn: Josh Houghton- Rollins Pond Draft UMP Comments
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2023 4:05:09 PM
Attachments: [Requested comments on Draft UMP for Rollins Pond.docx](#)

You don't often get email from mpaikens1@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Please find attached my feedback on the Rollins Pond Draft UMP.

Regards,
Michael Aikens

From: [BettyFilkins](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Campgrounds and Reserve America
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 11:56:03 AM
Attachments: [Josh Houghton DEC.docx](#)

You don't often get email from bettyfilkins@protonmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Mr.Houghton- please **find attached** our letter regarding DEC campgrounds and reservations as I heard you are looking into this for us the folks who love to go camping.

We sure hope indeed you are and help us go back to getting reservations without all the stress created of late..

Rich and Betty Filkins
Westerlo NY 12193

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

From: [Brent Johnson](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Camping reservation rules
Date: Monday, September 11, 2023 8:04:13 PM

[You don't often get email from brentjohnson7@me.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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

Please allow NYS residents a earlier reservation window than out of state campers to book DEC and state campsites. It's getting really difficult to book anymore.
Also, not a fan of allowing long term camping at Rollins Pond past 14 days.

Thank you for considering my requests.

From: [Patrick Foley](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Camping Reservations
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 1:37:44 PM

You don't often get email from foleypatricksr@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Instead of rewarding the rule breakers why don't you enforce the rules you have now. Most r
v's have license plates with license plate number on them. Make the campground staff start
doing their job.

Also new york state residents should have a thirty day priority window for reservation
booking.

Other states have similar rules in place to allow taxpayers. That fund the parks the first
opportunity to take advantage of them.

Instead of people from out of state taking over prime sites for the entire summer. Which brings
us back to The subject at the top of this email, people breaking rules and staying more than 14
days.

From: [Margaret McCullough](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Camping reservations
Date: Sunday, September 3, 2023 10:13:59 AM

You don't often get email from mcculmarg@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

My name is Margaret McCullough and I live in the Glens Falls area. I do not agree with allowing longer reservation times at Rollins Pond or any other state campground. It is already too difficult to reserve a site as it is. Your efforts should be centered on methods to stop the abuse currently happening in the parks.

From: [Lorrie Paul](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Changes to 14 day limit
Date: Thursday, August 31, 2023 8:55:58 AM

You don't often get email from lorrie922@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Hello Mr. Houghton,

I'm writing to let you know I heartily disagree with extended stays at all parks, specifically the one being considered at Rollins Pond. It seems as if this policy rewards bad behavior.

We are life long campers! Our favorite sites beings Buck Pond, Durant, Nicks, and Brown Tract.

I am so dismayed over the etiquette of campers at the parks these days. Multiple cars on sites, tents set up off in the woods, trash left out. Sadly I'm equally dismayed at the staff who overlook these concerns. It seems that the DEC has rules in place for which are not enforced. Site management, cars, tents, unoccupied sites, (when it clearly states if unoccupied will be forfeited), noise, trash out leading to wildlife issues, abandoned sites.

I would advocate for enforcing what's already in place. Understandably staffing is a concern, however we see staff doing their jobs at our favorite campgrounds, Buck Pond, Durant, Nicks, BTP, which is why we return.

I say no to extended stays, enforce what's already in place and work to preserve the beauty of our woods.

Thanks for listening!

Lorrie Paul

PS kudos to staff at Buck Pond, Durant, Nicks and BTP

From: [Jeffrey Wood](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Comment on Draft Unit Management Plan for Rollins Pond
Date: Friday, August 25, 2023 9:48:27 PM

You don't often get email from jeffreywood058@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

My family has camped at Rollins Pond for years. We love it there. I offer the following comments on the draft plan:

- The "rustic" feel and forest cover of Rollins Pond is one of the things we like best about it. Please give careful thought to any tree removal.
- My experience at other DEC campgrounds where the showers and parking were added to the bathrooms is that these become noisy gathering places that diminish the experience at nearby sites. Additionally, these facilities are relatively well lit in an otherwise dark environment so that fugitive light is disturbing to nearby sites. The Facility Infrastructure Capacity Analysis shows an excess of showers under existing conditions. The only apparent advantage to adding showers and parking at the restroom facilities appears to be reducing traffic. I suspect that ready availability of parking will encourage more people to drive to the restrooms. Currently people drive to the shower house, but walk to the bathrooms, because there is no parking at the bathrooms. Providing parking will encourage more people to drive to the bathrooms. Showering is typically a once a day or less activity. Bathroom use could entail multiple car trips a day. Please reconsider the logic of adding the parking and shower facilities in the new bathrooms. If those move forward, please carefully consider lighting and measures to reduce the annoyance to nearby sites.
- Regarding extended stay camping, note that "competition" for waterfront sites on peak weekends (e.g. July 4) is fierce. Every year we talk to fellow campers about how frustrated they are about getting sites they want on those weekends. Please consider exempting the peak weeks from extended stays. The reservation system and challenges of getting sites is the most frustrating and disappointing thing about Rollins Pond. Please don't make it worse.

Thank you.

Jeff Wood
Apalachin NY

From: [Barb Ladabouch](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Comment on Roland's pond
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 4:13:37 PM

You don't often get email from barbladabouch@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi I enjoy going to fish Creek and Rollins pond both. I have found it extremely difficult now to get spaces in either campground 14 days is more than enough. With a group on Facebook it gives you a heads up on openings but you pay \$25 a year to belong to it and it covers all the New York State campgrounds. Just unfortunately the people in that group will book multiple sites and not canceled to the days they're leaving and they decide which one they really want to keep then they release them in that group so outside people don't have a chance of getting a campsite. I would like to see the Adirondack one stay open until November 1st so we have a chance to see the moose take some late fall heights and explore more areas we haven't been able to during the crowded seasons. The group on Facebook I mentioned is called CAMPADK here's the website if you'd like to check it out.

<https://www.campadk.com/campsitephotos/>

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Sarah Schneider](#)
To: dec.sm.CampInfo
Subject: Comments in support of proposed changes at Rollins Pond (and one suggestion)
Date: Monday, August 21, 2023 12:14:58 PM

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I am writing to express my support for the proposed changes at Rollins Pond. I stayed there for several days in July of this year. The campground is beautifully sited and well-run, but in several ways compared unfavorably to other DEC campgrounds I have stayed at in recent years (in the Catskills). The lack of utility sinks was a major issue for my group; as we were car camping, we had no choice but to attempt to wash our dishes in the washroom sinks, which was a real challenge. I also noticed that the washrooms weren't in great condition.

I'm also in favor of more distributed showers, as we lost a fair bit of time as a group to the long distance to the shower building. That being said, I applaud the free EV chargers; these were very useful to our group. I'd be in favor of more chargers scattered throughout the campground.

One of the two campsites we stayed at had a severely disintegrated grill, which made cooking dinner challenging. I certainly support more money for campsite upkeep.

The low speed limits were excellent (as was high compliance by our fellow campers), but adding both a bike lane and more foot trails would make for a more pleasant experience. I hope that the current low speed limit, narrow road, and speed bumps are maintained, to reduce the temptation to speed.

My one additional suggestion would be insuring that there are more single-user/accessible/gender neutral washrooms on site; one member in our camping party is non-binary, and preferred the site that was close to a single-user washroom.

Overall, I had an excellent time at Rollins Pond, but I'm pleased to see more upkeep and investment being directed to make it as functional and pleasant as other DEC campgrounds.

Sincerely,

Sarah Schneider

From: jstenlake@twcny.rr.com
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Comments on Draft Management Plan for Rollins Pond
Date: Thursday, September 14, 2023 1:09:03 PM
Attachments: [Rollins Pond UMP Feedback.docx](#)

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Mr. Houghton,

Attached is a Word document with my feedback and comments on the draft management plan for Rollins Pond. Thank you for the opportunity to give feedback

Jeffrey Stenlake
Massena, NY

From: [L.Papernik](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: comments on The Draft UMP for the Rollins Pond Campground and Day-Use Area
Date: Monday, August 21, 2023 12:42:07 PM

You don't often get email from lapapernik@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Josh,

My family enjoys camping at Rollins Pond and have camped there during the summer for several years. Please consider the following suggestions:

1. It would be great if EV charging stations could be added to Rollins Pond campground. This would encourage the use of EV vehicles in the park which would decrease the carbon footprint and also be quieter. Consider adding some EV charging stations to the boat launch parking lot and other parking lots and also consider adding additional ev chargers to certain designated ev campsites (perhaps at the upper end of the campground). When we have camped at Rollins Pond, some years we have changed our campsite due to a neighbor having a noisy generator. It would be nice if there were a section of the campground that was free of generators that had ev chargers.
2. We are strongly in favor of continued plantings and campsite restorations.
3. We would love to see some more ranger naturalist programs.

Thanks,

Lisa Papernik

From: [Charlie Conant](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Comments on UMP Rollins Pond
Date: Monday, August 21, 2023 12:01:53 PM

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Extend the camping season into the fall please.

Charlie Conant

Greenfield Massachusetts

--

From: [John Delesky](#)
To: SLMP_UMP_Comments@apa.ny.gov
Subject: DEC and NYS Parks and Rec campgrounds
Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 3:47:49 PM

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We just came back from a short 3-day camping trip to Verona Beach SP. I know this is a NY Parks and Recreation campground but the same will apply to DEC campgrounds. At Verona we registered only a couple of months ahead of time so could not get the very nice waterfront sites. There are 11 of those at Verona. For the 3 days we were there we watched the 11 prime sites. Only 6 were occupied by tents or camper RVs. Five stayed vacant while we were there yet we could not rent them because somebody had reserved them. They never came. That's not right. We have seen on campground literature that the renter has to show up the first afternoon/night, set up, and be ready to camp. We have noticed over a dozen years of camping that this is a frequent occurrence. Prime sites taken but nobody on them. Same thing this July Nick's Lake. We camped at an inland site while several waterfront sites were vacant. We could not rent them-reserved by missing renters. I am suggesting if campers do not show up, set up, and camp within 48 or cancel their registration they lose their spot and all camping fees. People are taking these prime sites and then deciding if they want to take vacation then. They don't cancel. The money means nothing to them. So maybe they don't come and Joe Every Summer Camper is regulated to a view of trees and mosquitos. Do something about this. jd

From: [MARTY ANDREWS](#)
To: dec.sm.CampInfo; SLMP_UMP_Comments@apa.ny.gov
Subject: DEC considers testing longer stays at Adirondack campground -
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 10:59:29 PM

You don't often get email from mandrews13@nycap.rr.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Ways to thwart campers who skirt its 14-night reservation limit is to not reward these campers with extra days! Cross reference their license plate numbers for their vehicle and trailers to see how many campers take advantage of this instead of using emails; family/friend names... The reservation system needs to be rectified. This should also be annotated on ReserveAmerica and not only the DEC website....”From July 1 through Labor Day only **14 cumulative** nights of camping can be obtained at any campground.” I am sure it will not inconvenience the people that are skirting the 14 night limit. In addition, the out of state fees should be increased. For example, MA Coastal Campgrounds charge \$22 for MA resident and \$70 for out of state resident and Inland Campgrounds charge \$17 for MA resident and \$54 for out of state residents; CT-\$17 for CT residents and \$27 non-CT residents; RI-\$24 for RI residents and \$45 non-resident. This additional money could enhance the campground.

Dave McGrath who owns the CampADK.com website is one of the Canadians that has taken advantage of this misuse at Fish Creek Ponds. He was there the last week of June, the 1st two weeks of July and the 1st three weeks of August and then he did not move from that site during the month of August. He even had his CampADK sign in front of his site the whole time. He sells a Base Camp membership that has literally caused agita for non-members. His website has a cancellation formatter that members can use so the sites are picked up immediately and do not go out to the public (the members make arrangements with cancellations). Extending their stay is not a good idea. It is difficult enough to get a site for 2 weeks which we do every year and have been for 30 years. This year my brother and his family got a site on 7/23 and we could not get a site until 7/28! They only stay 1 week so we're only with them a few days. Yes, I do have issues with CampADK, I have seen first hand the changes in reservations, conversations with fellow campers and people booking and cancelling. He is making money but not for the State of New York.

Kathryn Andrews
518-488-8939
19 Zack Lane
Averill Park, NY 12018



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518.891.2835
koch.larry@gmail.com

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Secretary
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973-219-9457
Lah2127@aol.com

Treasurer
Jay Kapolka
518.359.7298
mjkcpa@comcast.net

September 13, 2023

Josh Houghton
NYS DEC Bureau of Recreation
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233-5253

Dear Mr. Houghton,

This letter represents the Upper Saranac Lake Association's comments relevant to the UMP for the Rollins Pond campgrounds in the town of Santa Clara. Rollins Pond campground has provided wonderful camping experiences for almost 70 years. The DEC developed UMP for the facility provides a great framework for updating and enhancing the campers experience while visiting the pristine waters of the Upper Saranac Lake watershed.

The Upper Saranac Lake Association represents about 500 members, most of which own property on the shores on Upper Saranac Lake, Fish Creek ponds and several ponds in the Saranac Inn area. The purposes for which the USLA corporation is organized are: to preserve, enhance and protect the natural beauties and environmental purity of Upper Saranac Lake, its adjoining waters and the adjacent lands and forests; to encourage and assist in improving the recreational enjoyment of these waters and lands without thereby degrading or deteriorating the natural environmental quality thereof and generally to conserve and protect the interests of owners and tenants of the area embraced within the Upper Saranac Lake watershed.

The UMP contains many suggested improvements to the Rollins Pond campgrounds. We agree with the replacement of obsolete comfort stations and associated septic systems, replacement of the water systems, replacement of the paved surfaces and movement of the boat launch, developing a playground, along with shoreline stabilization/restoration efforts including tree/shrub plantings. All of these improvements will enhance camper experiences while revitalizing the environmental beauty of the facility.

What concerns us is what is missing from the UMP: an in-depth discussion on management of pond water quality and control of invasive species. This Association, the Upper Saranac Foundation and NY State have invested a lot of resources to remove and control milfoil in Fish Creek ponds and by extension, Upper Saranac Lake.



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mjkcpa@comcast.net

The Foundation continues that effort up stream while maintaining already cleaned-up areas. Milfoil removal is a continuous process; any progress is lost with even short term neglect. Every new boat entering the Rolling Pond represents a possible new hazard. To maintain progress in this area we recommend the following suggestions as part of the UMP:

- Require every boat that enters the campground be inspected for invasive species at the main gate by Watershed personnel.
- Provide a hot water, high pressure boat decontamination station at the boat launch ramp site for Watershed personnel use.
- Allow use of the boat launch ramp during hours when it can be staffed by Watershed personnel
- Conduct training of campground DEC employees on the importance of maintaining water quality and invasive species mitigation so they can become part of the overall effort in their daily work.

Lastly, while the UMP states the number of campsites will not increase, the enhanced quality of the campground will inherently increase demand, hence usage. The UMP should include a study of both campground and pond capacity to handle the camper/boat load. An overloaded facility increases sound, light and groundwater pollution along with additional traffic and garbage. The negative impact of overloading on the environmental will slowly degrade the overall experience for both campers and the local population.

The campground allows for a large number of people to enjoy the beautiful Upper Saranac watershed and the greater Adirondack Park. In general, we welcome the suggested upgrades to the facility but ask that the DEC also recognize the substantial investment in maintaining the watershed environment for all users made by campground neighbors. We ask that they work with all stakeholders to enhance and maintain the pristine waters for future generations.

Regards,

Larry Koch
President

Dave Powalyk
Vice President

cc: Tom Swayne, USL Foundation

From: [Gabrielle Ringmacher](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Don't do it
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 4:28:43 PM

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I just read an article about the proposal to allow people to camp for longer than 14 days at Rollins Pond. Please don't go forth with this idea. Most people already have trouble getting sites at the DEC and NY State campgrounds, especially since the camping seasons have been shortened. This will make it even more difficult.

What really needs to be done is cracking down on people reserving sites and then not canceling. All season people have reported empty sites at campgrounds that are showing fully booked on Reserve America. Often times the sites sitting empty are premium sites! This is wrong. Instead of fining people for cancelations, fine them for NOT canceling. And actually enforce the policy if people don't show up release those sites so others can book. Currently sites sit empty, yet the entire time they show book on Reserve America. This is frustrating to those of us that want to use those sites, but instead sit home because nothing is available.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Gabrielle Ringmacher

From: billrugg50@gmail.com
To: dec.sm.CampInfo
Subject: draft unit management plan (UMP) for Rollins Pond Campground and Day-Use Area
Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 2:57:54 PM

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

To:

Josh Houghton
NYS DEC Bureau of Recreation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-5253
Email: campinfo@dec.ny.gov.

I am sorry this is a day late for comments on the draft unit management plan (UMP) for Rollins Pond Campground and Day-Use Area. Hopefully, you will still consider my comments.

My family and I have been long time NYS campers, and camp for several days each season at various NYSDEC campgrounds and NYSOPRHP parks. Over the years we have camped at Allegany, Letchworth, Four Mile, Lake Erie, Higley Flow, Fish Creek, Lake Harris, Little Sand Point, Selkirk Shores, Lewey Lake, Kuka, Treman, Watkins Glen, Lake Durant, Cranberry Lake, and of course Rollins Pond. Over the last couple of years we have camped at Rollins Pond Campgrounds at least once, if not twice each season. The following are some of the reasons we return to Rollins Pond year after year:

- The long linear layout of the campgrounds, instead of the loop layout found in Cranberry Lake or Nicks Lake. This makes for more sites directly on the water, which is the biggest draw for us. The linear layout also reduces the noise by only having neighbors on two or three sides, rather all four. This great reduces the generator noises that we encounter at Nicks Lake.
- We find Rollins Pond to be a paddler's and swimmer's paradise. We never have had an issue with letting our kids (and now grandkids) swim to the island or paddle where ever they want on Rollins Pond.
- We find the rustic nature of Rollins Pond a plus as it appears to attract more tents / small trailers and not campers with big rigs that operate their generators twice a day so they run the air conditioning and play their radio.
- Rollins Pond provides a quiet camping setting, without the road noise that is prevalent in other campgrounds like Lake Durant and Lewey Lake.

With this as a background, we have read the draft unit management plan (UMP) for Rollins Pond and offer up the following comments:

- **Item 17 - Make seasonal camping permits available to campers.** This by far is our single biggest concern with UMP. The UMP states on page 64 that for 2019 the average occupancy rate was 71%, while the weekend occupancy rate was only 64%. It does not make sense that the weekend occupancy rate is less than the average, as every time we have camped at Rollins Pond, the weekends are far more crowded than during the week. Based on the graph, these values appear to be based on the averages over the entire season. A more useful statistic would be the average occupancy rates over the period of July 1st to Labor Day. Another useful statistic would be percentage of capacity over the long weekends surrounding July 4th and Labor Day.

By booking under separate names, couples can already stay for a full 4 weeks. Would this allow a couple to book for a full 8 weeks. By having multiple logins to Reserve America, individuals can also get around the current two week rule. We have heard of one couple, who's dog also has a Reserved America account, just to get around the 2 week limit. However, our biggest concern is by having a 4 week booking window you open up the ability for campers to lock up good sites earlier, and then change their start date. This creates holes in the camping schedule, and lost revenue to NYS. Although there is a cost to play this scheme, the cost is minimal and seems to only benefit Reserve America, and not NYS. This gaming of the system is not unique to Rollins Pond, and we have encountered it at other parks and campsites including Allegany, Letchworth and Fish Creek. The process and problem is also discussed on other website associated with camping in NYS.

In short, NYS needs to come up with a better method so that sites are not locked up early, nor cancelled at the last minute without penalties. I suggest you review the policy of other state, provincial (Ontario and Quebec) and federal campgrounds to see how they deal with these problems. Sounds like a good project for a summer intern.

- **13. Construct an accessible foot trail to connect to Adirondack Rail Trail.** Although we like the idea of connecting the Otter Loop (near site 258) to the existing rail trail via a new trail and bridge over Rollins Pond Outlet, we are concerned with additional traffic along the park road. Given the amount of available state land to the south of sites 252 to 258, we are against losing even one water front site to a parking lot. If this action item proceeds, the shared use of a parking lot for both trail hikes and bathroom facilities seems like a much better option provided that no campsites are lost.
- **14. Add utility sinks to all comfort stations.** The master plans states that the number of toilets exceed both NYSDEC and NYSHD standards. Although that maybe be true, the number of current sinks, only one for every four toilets, seems inadequate. We never have had to wait for a toilet, but have waited several times to use the one sink. We would not only welcome the addition of grey water or utility sinks, but also suggest adding additional sinks and mirrors in all the bathrooms.
- **1. Replace four comfort stations #5, 15, 18, 22.** Part of the justification for this is to add showers along the campground road, and reduce the trips to the center shower facility. Over the years of camping at Rollins Pond, we have never not found a place to park at the center

shower facility, nor have we ever had to wait for an empty shower stall. As such, we believe the current center shower house does not need to be supplemented with additional showers. We fully agree with the concept of overtime updating ALL the bath houses. Rather than replacing the four comfort stations with ones with showers, we would rather see more comfort stations replaced but without showers.

Although Comfort Station #22, might be centrally located between a number of good campsites, it seems like a poor choice to update. It is located on a hill and the additional parking would require substantially regrading of the forest floor.

7. Replace trailer dump station. We are not sure this is critical, as Fish Creek has a nice trailer dump station just down the road. However, what is need is more staging space so that trailers using the dump station do not block exit to Rollins Ponds which does occur.

5. Make improvements at the boat launch. We are for improvements to the boat launch, but do not want to encourage additional power boats on the pond.

We like the improvements discussed in action items: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15 and 16. In addition to improving the campground, we would like to see addition maintenance staff added to staff to repair items on and off season, including fire pits, and bathrooms.

Items not addressed in the UMP, but would increase the camping experience at Rollins Pond:

- Keep the entire campsite open to camping right through Columbus Day, or at least through the end of September. We think some of the best sites at Rollins Pond are sites 200 through 256. These should remain open, right to the end.
- Reduce the horsepower for boats from the current maximum of 25. Ideally, I would like to see powerboats completely restricted from access to Rollins Pond, similar to Nicks Lake. I understand this would not eliminate the powerboat access for the hand full of grandfathered cabins along the west shoreline. Reducing the use of power boats, can only increase the great paddling (canoe, kayak, SUP), sailing, and swimming experience that this campground offers!
- We really enjoy the a benefit of having boat rental, wood, ice, and ice cream vendors access the campsite, and we hope this continues!!
- We would like to see the park re-cycle the bags the wood come in.

Items not addressed in the UMP, but would increase the camping experience at all State Parks and Campsites:

- Find a method to reduce the gaming of the current reservation system and making it more of a level playing field. Not only would this help the campers, but it should add income to NYS.
- Enforce the generator quiet hours. We have been driven from our campsites at both Lewey

and Nicks Lake by both the smell and noise of generators running outside of the designated time to run generators. We tried calling the park rangers once at 7:00 AM when one of the campers was running their generator, but the ranger's phone at Nicks Lake when unanswered at 7:30, 8:00 and 8:30.

- Where applicable, enforce the power boat restrictions. It is not always done at Nicks Lake, as we have seen kayaks with electric motors on the lake.
- Designate camping areas (loops), to be pet free, as is done at Hamlin Beach SP. Also, designate camping areas to be generator and/or radio free.

Thank you for your time. Please reach out me if you have any questions.

Bill

William Rugg
112 Andover Lane
Williamsville, NY 14221

716-594-4836

From: billchudzik@cox.net billchudzik@cox.net
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Draft Unit Management Plan for Rollins Pond
Date: Wednesday, August 23, 2023 3:16:50 PM

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I agree with all of the proposals for improvements to Rollins Pond, except Item 17 "Make extended camping permits available to campers." This was also described in the Survey as Item 15. "Extended camping stays (more than 14 nights) for campers." I strongly disagree with that provision.

The stated argument for this that was that "Rollins Pond had an average occupancy of 64% during the 2022 camping season, which indicates the ability to administer extended camping permits without creating an inequitable situation for other campers." This is not true.

The only reason that the sites might be unoccupied is that people reserved them for more time than they needed, and they did not release the site for the time that they were not going to use; or they left early because of bad weather.

Currently, you need to attempt to reserve a water site precisely 9 months before you want to go, or it will not be available at that time. People are forced to reserve their desired site as soon as it is available within the 9 month window, and reserve it for up to 2 weeks, just to have it available for when they were planning. Otherwise someone else would grab the site and reserve it for up to 2 weeks, just so they will have access to it for when they plan. The only ways that sites open up for reservation for a particular date is if people refund the site for that date, after they have it reserved.

If anything, the amount of time allowed for reservation should be reduced to 10 days in order to give more people the opportunity to make reservations for a site that they may want, for the time that they may want it.

From: [Kim McDonough](#)
To: SLMP_UMP_Comments@apa.ny.gov; [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Extending 14 day restrictions
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 10:48:28 AM

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Hello,

In reading the article about possibly extending the reservation from 14 days to a longer length of time I would like to send along my opinion. It is difficult to reserve campsites now, with the current competition, with a 14 day limit. That limit seems appropriate to allow others the opportunity to camp now that NYS campgrounds are so popular. I do not recommend extending it.

I actually have another proposal to allow NYS residents the opportunity to reserve a campsite ahead of residents in other states and countries.

Sincerely,

Kim

--

Kim McDonough

From: thewoodcarte@gmail.com on behalf of [Chris Carte](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Feedback for Josh Houghton
Date: Thursday, September 7, 2023 10:06:31 AM

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Hello Josh,

I recently read an article online about campers monopolizing sites at some NYS campgrounds and a possible solution being considered to lengthen the maximum stay from 14 days to something even longer.

As a 50 year camper at NYS campgrounds, I strongly oppose this idea.

To allow a family to occupy a site for longer than 2 weeks is completely contrary to what I suspect was the original intent of the park system. I believe the goal was, and should be, to have a system that affords the greatest number of families FAIR opportunities to enjoy our parks in our short summer season here in New York.

In my opinion, if anything, the maximum stay should be SHORTENED to 7 days, not lengthened from 14.

I have extensive experience camping at Ausable Point Campground in Peru. I'm 60 years old and have been camping at Ausable with my family since the age of 10. I live in Queensbury. Some of the waterfront sites in this park are extremely difficult to reserve, even when prepared to book 9 months in advance on the very morning certain sites become available on Reserve America.

The main reason for this is due to the increasing popularity of camping, especially since the onset of the pandemic. Many more campers.....same number of sites.

As it stands now (with the 14 day limit), any given prime site has the potential to turn over (be occupied) only six times over the months of June, July and August, assuming the lucky camper that gets the reservation books for the full 2 weeks, which is what routinely happens.

Obviously, to lengthen the max stay beyond 2 weeks would only make this situation worse.

In my opinion, more effort and energy should be put into having campground staff take decisive action when campers abandon their reservations and do not show up. This results in many nice sites sitting empty and unavailable throughout the summer. But this is a topic for another email.

Let me know if you would appreciate any additional comments or ideas, either via email or a phone call. Thanks for the opportunity to respond.

Sincerely,

Chris Carte

--

Christopher C. Carte
The Wood Carte, Inc.
1063 Rt 9
Queensbury, NY 12804
518-793-7655
www.woodcarte.com

From: [Houghton, Josh \(DEC\)](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: FW: Comments
Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 9:08:22 AM
Attachments: [Rollins Pond Golden Beach.pdf](#)

Please include in the comment package

From: Phillips, Megan (APA) <Megan.Phillips@apa.ny.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2023 8:17 AM
To: Houghton, Josh (DEC) <josh.houghton@dec.ny.gov>; McNamara, Matthew R (APA) <Matthew.McNamara@apa.ny.gov>
Subject: FW: Comments

From: Gerald Delaney <gdelaneylgrb@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 9:26 PM
To: Phillips, Megan (APA) <Megan.Phillips@apa.ny.gov>
Subject: Comments

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Please find an attachment with our comments on Rollins Pond and Golden Beach

--

Gerald W. Delaney
Executive Director
Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board
326 Downs Road
Cadyville NY 12918
518-569-7800

From: [craig piccarreto](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#); [Lori Piccarreto](#)
Subject: Idea"s for these extended stays 2 weeks plus
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 9:17:47 AM

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Glad to see these issues are being looked at. Very hard to book for last several years in the Adirondacks and always wondered why. I think extended stays is ok. BUT if campers have water sites not fair to people trying to enjoy that option. After camping at a water site give extended stay campers the option to move to another site for new campers to enjoy. It would not be fair for them to use it longer. My opinion.

Mr. Josh Houghton EPS2 (NR)
NYS DEC Bureau of Recreation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-5253
Email: Campinfo@dec.ny.gov

Dear Mr. Houghton:

We have been camping in the Adirondacks for over 50 years. It has always been a great experience *until* the last 4-5 years. ***Reserve America has become a nightmare. Not only that it has to be hurting the bottom line for the campground budgets.***

We always loved it getting there early years ago waiting in line with all the other excited folks to get a spot at which time the Ranger did an assessment of your equipment and put you on a site that would accommodate you. (Today you will see a 4x4 tent on a site that would fit 2 or 3 campers but a 25 foot camper wedged into a site with his backend in the road as that was all that was left to choose from). We also know for the safety of all those parked on the highway that is no longer an option.

Until recently you can't "walk up" and get a site without going thru Reserve America and it will tell you the campground is completely booked while you stand there and look at 25% or more of the sites that are empty.

How do you fix that nightmare? We have a suggestion that was given to us BY A DEC EMPLOYEE –we loved the idea and we have talked to many folks who agree!

#1 On January 1st open all reservations to everyone for the year. Not just 90 days ahead at 9 AM which is very frustrating- especially if you are at work and don't have access to a computer at that exact SECOND as yes they are gone at 9:00.10. (As you may know the wide open reservations was done once during COVID and it was a HUGE relief to be able to get a site we could fit in and it was more timely to allow us to coordinate with our vacation time. Only this time LET EVERYONE KNOW THAT IS THE PLAN- not wait till they were open for a few weeks then announce it like was done during COVID).

#2- CHARGE MUCH MORE TO CANCEL maybe even half the cost of the total days booked - unless of course they provide legitimate medical proof why they could not come as emergencies do happen. I sure it wouldn't take long to catch those who do it over and over and perhaps they should go on a "watch list".

#3 Why not give the people that live in New York State a 2 week window prior to opening reservations up to the "general public" after all our tax money does go to help the programs running the state and DEC campsites.

#4 If the campers do not show up within a 24 hour window open them back up to the public.... HOWEVER, when you ask at the gate why the site is empty and why they don't put the site back in the system when no one shows up they say "Albany won't let us" WHY NOT? Or they say they could be running late- used to be you had to CALL and let them know you were running late so not to give your site away. Sometimes they say "they may be running late" When there are 3-4 people sitting in the booth one of them certainly can be on the phone making a call to see if the campers are indeed coming. But I do believe it still says you have to have your equipment on the site so it won't be given away. And indeed we have seen sites with equipment and no people for a week or even 2 weeks!

This suggestion of all sites opening at once on January 1st would also slow up the game players from booking numerous sites then cancelling them at a very minimal charge. This year by August 1st there were **LITTERLY THOUSANDS** of cancellations in the Fish Creek campground alone by those folks who had no intentions on using all of them, didn't cancel till the last minute and it stopped those of us who can't plan vacation in a short time or until our workplace opens

up vacations which the majority of the time it done by seniority but by that time all the best sites are taken (believe me we have a list our equipment will fit in for many campgrounds and be able to set up and its not the same number of sites that are in the campgrounds!) Even now in August you will see people post on the Fish Creek Campground site they are "releasing the site for 2 weeks" for the next week- TOO LATE FOR US WHO HAVE TO PLAN OUR VACATIONS. Therefore most times the site remains open.

We truly believe a good portion of it is stemming from a Canadian by the name of Dave McGrath. He, I am sure you may be aware, now has a website (campack.com) that campers have to pay \$24 a year for pictures of every site with info on the site, and to help get campsites. He encourages his subscribers to let him know to give his subscribers an advantage on getting the site first. Not only that he has been advising people on how to cheat the system to get the sites they want and calls it a "rolling reservation"* He even tells folks to let him know and he'll help them get reservations and admits he books numerous sites during the same weeks and if his friends want to come he will make sure it is turned over to them. Not only that he personally is in fish creek well over the 2 week limit for July and August when technically you are limited to 2 weeks. How? He tells people to sign up for numerous emails and book the weeks under different names/emails. I think opening all sites at once will eliminate that cheating the system plan. He also is the "administrator" on the Fish Creek Campground Facebook page- and just happens to mention they need to sign up for Base Camp to help them get the sites they are looking for and before anyone else with his "paid subscription"

I do not believe that was not the intention when limitations were set so **all** folks could enjoy the limited summer days in the Adirondacks. I asked one lady who I seen there in June and when we came back to visit someone else she was still there and we asked how she did that- sure enough she thanked Dave McGrath for helping them find a way but did not want to disclose how she did it.

Years ago, before Reserve America, if you stayed more than 2 weeks you HAD TO MOVE YOUR EQUIPMENT OFF THE SITE AND GET BACK IN LINE TO GET A NEW RESERVATION at the gate. The staff at Fish Creek I am sure can verify this.

Just this week a person noted on the fish creek campground page on facebook he was able to get days thru Dave McGrath and its well worth the money to pay Dave McGrath on his website and yet reserve America showed no open sites and even one of the workers at the front gate (Debbie)put a comment on that there are no open sites as per Reserve America- maybe Dave is paying him to say that to get more subscribers or maybe he is cheating the system.

We personally think this should be looked into to benefit all of us.

Betty and Richard Filkins
325 CR 413
Westerlo, NY 12193
518-275-2935

*A rolling reservation is when he tells folks start early in the season and book 2 weeks- he says it is best not to do it on a weekend but midweek to midweek as most campers do not like to go midweek to midweek so won't be booking midweek. At the end of that 2 weeks he says to book 2 more weeks. After the 4th week book 2 more and go back and cancel the first one. In order to do that you will need to set up additional emails. You keep moving forward and cancelling the first weeks you don't want. MEANTIME Jane Doe and John Smith only get 2 weeks' vacation and they can't get a reservation as these folks are playing this "game" so they go elsewhere. AT THE SAME TIME you do arrive at fish creek and more than half the sites are empty (many sites better than the one you were forced to book to get in) as these folks are killing the system. Perhaps some pay and don't show up- they don't care the cost reservation might not be much to them but to most of us we can't afford to play that game nor can NYS afford to keep up the campgrounds and pay employees at the same time. Sadly I know a lot of folks who came to fish creek for years and enjoyed their 2 weeks and wont even try as its so frustrating and I agree. That's not how it's supposed to be.

From: [Donna Blake](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: longer stays at DEC campgrounds
Date: Saturday, September 2, 2023 10:56:41 AM

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Dear Josh,

Before you allow longer stays at any DEC campsites, you need to address the fact that many of your sites, prime water sites, sit empty. ResrveAmerica needs to be fired. Their strict cancellation policy makes people say, why bother. We camped in Rollins Pond, this summer from Monday, July 31st-Saturday, August 5th. We were on Site 194(ps, a river runs through it when it rains as the run off from the bathroom across the road runs down the gullied driveway) and the 2 sites adjacent to us were never occupied. They also were not listed on ReserveAmerica. When I went to book a water site in May, no sites were available on the water. I got my site through campadk that monitors cancellations. There are cancellations, but many sites are left empty. You see them as you drive through the campground. This issue needs to be addressed first. Thank you, Donna Blake

From: [Tracy Hoepner](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Longer stays feedback
Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 10:07:49 PM

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There are multiple issues with the current reservation system that extending stays at campgrounds will not solve. Campsites are left unused because campers do not cancel reservations. There are those that use multiple emails and family members to skirt the system. Abusers of the system should be held accountable and not be allowed to reserve sites. You might as well change the sites to seasonal campgrounds.

Perhaps requiring driver license information at the time of payment would be helpful to prevent system abuse.

Unimpressed with current system.

Tracy Hoepner

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Zachary Denton](#)
To: SLMP_UMP_Comments@apa.ny.gov
Subject: No Playground at Rollins Pond
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2023 11:24:38 AM

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Hello,

I would like to offer an opinion on the proposed playground at Rollins Pond Campground in the proposed management plan. I personally agree with almost everything in the management plan. But, I really dislike the idea of a playground at Rollins Pond. I believe this will ruin the aesthetic of the campground, and diminish the value of nature and quietness the campground has to offer. We go there for its serene beauty, loon calls, and immersion into nature. I enjoy the prospect of taking my young daughter there to escape societies busyness, and, to explore the woods and nature. A playground will commercialize and add something that is synthetic and artificial to the grounds, which is the opposite of what that place is to campers.

Thanks,

Zachary Denton
Native Adirondacker

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Richard and Betty](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: NYS Campgrounds
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:10:40 PM

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Dear DEC Officials:

Thank you for the opportunity to let me to express my opinion about the NYS Campground's. Most of my experience comes from Camping at Fish Creek camp grounds for well over 50 years and now, my children and grandchildren love coming here or Rolland's Pond IF they can get a reservation! This is what I see as concerns and many people I talk to have the same concerns. I feel I have a lot of ideas and hope at least you will hear me out.

RESERVATIONS: I'd have to say our number one concern is the current Reserve America experience. I understand the concept going to a reserve system rather than standing in line on the road. However, in the last five or so years, it has gotten out of control. We have friends that we've made over the years that won't even come anymore because it's become so stressful just to get a reservation even in the spring and fall. It is my opinion that the Reservations system started to go downhill when a guy from Canada (namely Dave McGrath) started "helping" people from his teardrop camping group get reservations. In fact he would tell people "even if you're not sure you can come make a reservation. You can always cancel it at the last minute and let me know so that another person might be able to get your site that didn't know that they could come". Now he not only helps his group but he has developed a paid system which costs families \$24 a year to belong for any New York State campground. AND HE HAS THOUSANDS OF FOLLOWERS. I don't know how but it appears he's helping these people get reservations over the general public, other than I know he

tells his group to let him know before they cancel when they are going to cancel, so he can make it known to his members that a site will be open on site xyz for example “on Tuesday at 1 o’clock” or if he knows someone is looking for a specific site he notifies just that person - People even thank him on Fish Creek campground Facebook page, for getting them a site when nobody else could get one - but who knows if it’s a “paid advertisement” to get more people to sign up and pay him. I found it very interesting when I spoke to a Canadian couple this week that they absolutely hate him and they said it before I asked and said “he’s ruined the reservation system”. You can speak to the people that work at Fish Creek and they feel the same way about this McGrath guy. He also tells campers how to get a reservation for mid July by starting when the campground opens and starting to book the site they want under different email names. And they keep moving their reservation up until they get the weeks they want and cancel the first reservations but by that time most of us had to have their vacation in and we can’t play that game or we don’t wanna play that game and we can’t wait for an open site that just MIGHT come up unless you’re retired and can go at any time. We were here in June and the reservation system said everything was full but yet it would be easy to say over 35% of the campsite was empty and I’ve heard this from people that were here even in July. Mr. McGrath even said that he reserved the sites on each side of him for his “friends” that may come and if they don’t he just cancels. I did not see this for myself, but I’ve heard that the campsites on either side of him are many times empty, so does he just do this so he has “extra room” and it only cost him a few bucks to cancel on each side before the reservation begins and hope that nobody sees that they are empty? Or does he save them for his Followers that are paying him?

I have two suggestions that may disable that concept.

#1 is charge more for a cancellation as around \$15 to cancel is not a deterrent to play the games that are going on. If you were to charge at least half the cost of the campsite reservation (unless they can prove

there was an emergency which is sadly always a possibility) the state would have a money to use to pay for employees and the cost of upkeep - if indeed they are allowed to keep the charades going.

#2 if all the reservations were opened up ALL at the same time at the beginning of the year, everyone would have equal opportunity to get a site and those that play games and get 10 or more different sites so they can pick the one out they want would not have a opportunity to play that game. Nor would people be able to book extra sites so they can “decide what to do later down the road” as they explain to others their reasoning.

#3. Not enough sites- What is the states reasoning behind making the camping season shorter and shorter? it used to be open in April but now it doesn't open till May (and even then only a portion of the campsite is open with the biggest and best sites in the closed section until Memorial Day) and now it closes Columbus Day and not in early November shortening the season by almost 2 months. Which in turn, crowds more campers into fewer sites in a shorter “season”. We used to come in October after Columbus Day and now the campsite is closed. Sure now that we have a camper that can keep us warm and not a tent!! We were told they needed to wait for the college students to be off for the summer which is the reason for the closures -what about people that need to pay off those college loans? Couldn't they use a few bucks? PLEASE See my suggestion below....

RULES: People are breaking the rules more and more. Here are a few major examples that no matter how much is in print or signage is still happening; **SPEEDING-** The biggest rule they break is speeding and my fear is some kid, older camper or anyone is going to get killed. And I think the people know that the employees “in charge” do not have authority to give a speeding ticket or even do anything about it other than yell. But at the same time, they can't be everywhere and do the job that they were hired to do.

VEHICLES ON SITES: People are parking all over the place with three and four cars in the site and even after they're told they can't have more than two vehicles. They'll wait a few hours and bingo. They are back

but like I said the employees here have no real authority and it's a big place.

PEOPLE RIDING BIKES AT NIGHT: whether it's kids or adults out there, riding bikes, with no lights whatsoever at night - there's another accident waiting to happen I can remember when they used to patrol at night but that doesn't happen anymore...

FIREWOOD: the majority of the people follow the rules of getting it local, but then you see these people come in with an enclosed trailer and they open it up and it's full of wood. Or just drive in from another state with a pick up full of wood you know they didn't buy that much locally with the cost to stay for a week or 2 weeks. Not only that people are checking out and taking the wood back home with them - spreading insects everywhere. Again - no authority at the gate.

DOGS: the majority of the people have their dogs on a leash. The problem is the people with the big dogs who think they can control them. Their dogs are wandering all over the site and they're throwing sticks in the water which the dog is chasing and barking (and barking and barking because he's playing or wants to play more). This spring a little dog on a leash was killed by a big dog that flew out of a campsite and grabbed him. And they've "clamped" down on that rule, by making you sign a form so that you know, they have to be tied up but it still being broken over and over again even now we see dogs running free- once again no real authority nor can they be everywhere and do their job at the same time.

GENERATORS - personal request- I understand the concept of limiting the hours of Generators, but the generator hours in the morning are from 9 to 11. For us people who sleep with CPAP's we need to recharge our batteries so we have to make sure we run that generator during the allowed hours and then they can start again from 4 to 7. Why not have the hours from 8-10 then 5-8 so when we want to go places or go canoeing we have more "free" hours between the generator times? PLUS in addition many of us are not cooking over a wood fire anymore because of the cost of wood, so if we are using our cookstoves and microwaves in our camper- those hours more line up with breakfast

and dinner!!

WHATS THE ANSWER FOR RULES? Have at least one Park police assigned to Fish Creek and Rolland's Pond. He would earn his pay in just July and August not to mention June and September.

WIDENING THE ROADS. Many of us as we get older can now afford bigger campers and not come in tents anymore, but it is like hitting a mole at the fair into a little hole, trying to pass people on these roads in the campsites not to mention kids on bicycles and kids who will grab a hold of your camper and ride right behind you. We were all excited when we heard they were going to widen the roads. Then we heard Dave McGrath got his followers to all protest widening the roads. I don't know if it's true, but I heard this project is on hold. Many is us certainly hope not.

TRIMMING TREES: I know the tree huggers don't want anything trimmed back but when campers are costing you a hundred thousand dollars many sites are no longer an option as the trees hang down so low as well as along the roads. I have seen some improvement in this area, but it needs to be a little more aggressive. The reason I hear is only someone who has been trained can do it, and no one working at the campsite has been trained in forestry. What Good FREE training exercise for the students in forestry at Paul Smith college just north of these campsites!!

EMPLOYEE SHORTAGE: so many times I have heard they don't have enough employees - has the state ever considered "campground hosts" like they do in the federal campgrounds?

You would have to pick certain sites for these host to camp on for the time they are hosting. These are the rules for most of the Federal host campsites:

1. Hosts get to camp for free.

2. You must be a US citizen
3. You must be over 21 years old
4. You must volunteer 20 hours a week with a two month minimum
5. OPTIONAL at some places: You get paid \$20 a day for each day you work to help pay for your propane and incidentals.
6. Hosts may be asked do work in areas such as checking campers in and out, cleaning bathrooms, cutting grass, picking up garbage, emptying fire places, or entertaining campers.

Many of them only hire couples and both people are required to work 20 hours a week each.

As far as that goes - I have seen without a doubt hundreds of people over the years come in at night in the spring and fall after the gate is closed at 4 o'clock- stay all night and leave in the morning and nobody's checking those people out so they didn't pay anything to stay in the campsite. A host person could be put at the gate say from 4 to 10 not only would that generate money for the state. It would keep people out that don't have a permit to get in.

The other place in the fish creek campground where money is lost is for day use. People park along the road and get their bicycles out or their dogs out and ride/walk/run all the way around fish creek which is just over 4 miles. Nobody's checking their dogs vaccinations and they're doing it all for free and I don't care that they are local people let them buy a season pass, I pay taxes just like they do. A park police officer could be giving them tickets for parking along the road and entering the campground without a permit. I've seen on a beautiful fall day 10 to 15 cars. Many of them parked right up at the back gate because the back gate is closed. The employees just say their hands are tied. Revenue lost to pay for what we need in the campsite. In Addition on a hot summer day we have seen vehicles pull up along the bridge drop off their kids who walk in to go swimming and then come back and pick them up a couple of hours later... who is in charge of those kids while they're here by themselves?

Interesting that we were told on the weekend before Labor Day 80% of the campers in here were from Canada as it was a three day weekend for them . How do they beat out the New York State people to that extent? Especially in August? Another reason to let the New York State taxpayers have a jump on the reservations, even if it's just one week prior to when it opens up to the world 9 months in advance.

Again, thank you for letting me speak my mind and give you my ideas on how to possibly make it better.

Richard B Filkins
518-703- 5955
Filkinsr@aol.com

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September 18, 2023
Via Email (campinfo@dec.ny.gov)

Josh Houghton
NYS DEC – Division of Operations
Bureau of Recreation
625 Broadway
Albany NY 12233-5253

Re: Draft Unit Management Plans for Rollins Pond and Golden Beach
Intensive Use Areas

Dear Mr. Houghton:

Protect the Adirondacks has reviewed the draft Unit Management Plan (UMP) prepared by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for the Rollins Pond and Golden Beach Intensive Use Areas noticed in the August 16, 2023 Environmental Notice Bulletin. We welcome the opportunity to review and comment on these draft UMPs during the DEC's review process.

Rollins Pond campground was opened in 1955 and Golden Beach campground was opened in 1931. Thus, both campgrounds were developed and opened prior to adoption of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP). Accordingly, there was no consideration of APSLMP requirements or modern planning principles when these two campgrounds were designed. However, as discussed in detail below, the APSLMP imposes strict standards for the modification or upgrade of existing facilities, and those standards are not reflected in either of the UMPS. Consequently, neither UMP complies with the APSLMP.

Moreover, we believe that DEC must evaluate closure of the Rollins Pond campground so that recreational overuse of Rollins Pond can be addressed and the campground lands reclassified from Intensive Use to Wild Forest.

Neither UMP Complies With the APSLMP

The APSLMP states that the Guidelines for Management and Use of Intensive Use include:

1. Providing opportunities for camping “in a setting and on a scale that are in harmony with the relatively wild and undeveloped character of the Adirondack Park”.
2. “All intensive use facilities should be located, designed and managed so as to blend with the Adirondack environment and to have the minimum adverse impact possible on surrounding state lands and nearby private holdings. They will not be situated where they will aggravate problems on lands already subject to or threatened by overuse”.
3. “Construction and development activities . . . will . . . limit vegetative clearing; and preserve the scenic, natural and open space resources of the intensive use area”.
4. “Any new, reconstructed or relocated buildings or structures located on shorelines of lakes, ponds . . . **will be set back a minimum of 150 feet (campsites shall be 100 feet) from the mean high water mark** and will be located so as to be reasonably screened from the water body to avoid intruding on the natural character of the shoreline and the public enjoyment and use thereof”.
5. “All campgrounds will be of a rustic nature without utility hookups and other elaborate facilities . . . All facilities and appurtenances are to be constructed of natural materials to the fullest extent possible so as to blend with the natural environment”.
6. “The maximum size of future campgrounds in the Park will be in the range of **75 to 150** individual camping sites”.
7. “The **older, existing campgrounds will** be rehabilitated and reconstructed . . . to reflect modern site planning principles that will better blend the facilities with the environment and **comply with the provisions of [the APSLMP]**”.

The draft UMPs for the Rollins Pond and Golden Beach do not comply with these key provisions of the APSLMP. Since the campgrounds were originally created and opened some 92 to 68 years ago, before 1972, they were not planned in accordance with the APSLMP, which was adopted in 1972. Modern planning must be used to ensure that the campgrounds and all of their facilities are “located, designed and managed so as to blend with the Adirondack environment and to have the minimum adverse impact possible on surrounding state lands”.

The proposals within the two draft UMPs include 286 camping sites at Rollins Pond, and 204 camping sites at Golden Beach. These numbers are 90% and 30%, respectively, greater than the maximum number of campsites allowed by the APSLMP. The number of camping sites at the two campgrounds must be reduced to bring them into compliance with the APSLMP. Notably, the draft UMPs state that there are vacancies at the campgrounds. The vacancies indicate that the campgrounds have an excess number of campsites and should be reduced in size and the number of campsites.

In addition, the draft UMPs need to involve more plans and proposals, such as removing campsites that are more distant from the most intense area of the campgrounds, adding more vegetative plantings and the elimination of pavement, to make the “facilities . . . blend with the natural environment”, “to reflect modern site planning principles that will better blend the facilities with the environment”, and that “preserve the scenic, natural and open space resources

of the intensive use area”. For instance, at the Rollins Pond campground, sites 141 through 258 should be removed. Additionally, the campgrounds should not be designed to accommodate 40-foot-long recreational vehicles. Sites that are big enough for vehicles of that size and type do not “blend with the natural environment”, they are “customarily provided by private campgrounds”, and they could compete with private campgrounds with more elaborate facilities, which is discouraged by the APSLMP. APSLMP pp. 41-42.

The UMPs should make proposals (e.g., removing or relocating structures, privies, sewage systems, or campsites, and adding vegetative screening) to ensure that there will be no “new, reconstructed or relocated buildings or structures” located within 150 feet of the shorelines or within 100 feet of wetlands, that there will be no campsites within 100 feet of the shorelines, and that all buildings, structures and campsites are screened from the water to protect “the natural character of the shoreline and the public enjoyment and use thereof”.

Carrying Capacity

A carrying capacity study must be conducted for these two units to ensure that the ability of the lands and waters to withstand various uses, and the public’s experiences, are not overwhelmed or degraded. This is particularly important for these two units given that they have the potential to be “threatened by overuse” due to their use as campgrounds for thousands of campers. APSLMP p. 11. We are pleased to see that some discussion of carrying capacity is included in the draft UMPs, and that problems (“opportunities for solitude may be limited”) and some negative impacts are anticipated to be reduced as a result of management actions proposed in the UMPs. However, the draft UMPs do not actually assess whether the carrying capacity, particularly the biological carrying capacity, of the areas have been or will be exceeded. The draft UMPs need to contain a more in-depth “assessment of the physical, biological and social carrying capacity of the area with particular attention to portions of the area threatened by overuse in light of its resource limitations”. APSLMP p. 11.

In addition, the APSLMP states that boat launching sites in Intensive Use areas will only be provided on lakes where “the physical, biological and social carrying capacity of the lake, or a portion of the lake . . . will not be exceeded”. APSLMP p. 43. We support the proposal in the Golden Beach UMP to replace the boat launch with a hand launch¹, and we suggest that the same be proposed for the Rollins Pond campground boat launch. The draft Rollins Pond UMP does not contain any indication that the resources and ecosystems of the area will not be adversely impacted by the proposal to retain the existing boat launch. In the absence of a carrying capacity study relating to the waters of Rollins Pond, motorized boats should not be permitted at the Rollins Pond boat launch. This management action would help to ensure that invasive species do not enter Rollins Pond or Whey Pond.

¹ We suggest that barriers be added to ensure that motor boats are not launched at the new hand launch site.

Alternatives Must be Analyzed and Described in the UMPs

The two draft UMPs imply (p. iii) that alternatives were considered, but there must be an analysis of alternative management actions set forth in the draft UMP. Given the use of the Rollins Pond campground in conjunction with the nearby Fish Creek campground, the Rollins Pond UMP should evaluate as an alternative the closure of the Rollins Pond campground at a point in the future. The Fish Creek campground is a large campground that already provides public access to the same areas.

The Rollins Pond UMP indicates (pp. 1, 3) that the campground was originally opened with 35 campsites, and then expanded, to “meet the increasing need for campsites at neighboring Fish Creek Pond Campground”. Since camping attendance at this campground is trending down overall (excepting 2021 and 2022, likely due to the pandemic), DEC must at least evaluate a reduction in the number of campsites that would reduce the adverse impacts on the surrounding State lands.

We oppose the proposal to allow “extended camping permits” at the Rollins Pond campground (UMP p. 29). There is no indication of how long the “extended camping permits” would allow people to camp at the campground, and there are no details about how DEC plans to prevent campers from constructing permanent structures on the sites, or how it plans to manage evicting people from the campground if they overstay their extended reservation. Again, since camping occupancy is trending down, and there is an average of 64% occupancy of the campground, DEC should consider reducing the number of campsites by 50% at the Rollins Pond campground.

Reclassification of Lands

Again, the UMP should evaluate the option of closing Rollins Pond campground and reclassifying these lands as Wild Forest. Short of closure, the Rollins Pond UMP should consider closing the northern half of the campground and reclassifying those lands as Wild Forest. In either event, the UMP should clearly state the acreage of land that is proposed to be reclassified to Wild Forest and the acreage of land that is proposed to be reclassified to Intensive Use.

Also, Exhibit 15 shows a portion of land at the far northern end of the campground as proposed for reclassification from Wild Forest to Intensive Use, but that is not explained in the text of the draft UMP at page 27. The reclassification on the map appears to be related to the proposed foot trail to connect to the Adirondack Rail Trail Corridor described on page 28 of the UMP. We oppose any proposal to expand the footprint of the campground to the north, and we oppose the reclassification of that portion of land from Wild Forest to Intensive Use. The Saranac Lakes Wild Forest UMP already proposed a trail in that location and did not propose reclassification of the lands to Intensive Use. There is no justification to do so when the remainder of that area to the north is classified Wild Forest, with the exception of the Remsen Lake Placid Travel Corridor.

With respect to the Golden Beach UMP, we support reclassification of 31.1 acres to Wild Forest. In addition, we suggest that DEC consider reclassifying to Wild Forest all of the lands south of campsites 207 & 208.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Protect the Adirondacks, please accept our gratitude for the opportunity to share our comments on these draft UMPs.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Claudia K. Braymer in cursive script.

Deputy Director

cc: Megan Phillips, Adirondack Park Agency Deputy Director for Planning

From: dec.sm.CampInfo
To: nyssaoffice@nysnowmobiler.com
Bcc: [Houghton, Josh \(DEC\)](#)
Subject: RE: Comments on UMP
Date: Tuesday, September 19, 2023 9:42:00 AM

Hi,

Please be advised that there was no attachment sent with this email.

Thank you.

From: New York State Snowmobile Association <jdesenf@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 11:16 PM
To: dec.sm.CampInfo <CampInfo@dec.ny.gov>
Subject: Comments on UMP

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Hello Josh,

Please find attached comments from the New York State Snowmobile Association for the Rollins Pond and Golden Beach Campground and Day Use Area unit management plans.

Thank you

--

New York State Snowmobile Association
PO Box 740 Central Square, NY 13036
www.nysnowmobiler.com
888-624-3849 Ext. 104

From: [Mike Grasso](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Re:
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 2:30:05 PM

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Rollins pond trees block back in ability. Site sizes are not accurate.

On Wed, Aug 30, 2023, 10:55 AM dec.sm.CampInfo <CampInfo@dec.ny.gov> wrote:

Please specify the campground you are referring to? Thank you.

From: Mike Grasso <mjglmt98@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 8:58 AM
To: dec.sm.CampInfo <CampInfo@dec.ny.gov>
Subject:

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Trees are blocking the ways to back campers in larger than a 20 foot camper. I know that the preservation is important but it's not helpful when you book a site that says it's 30 feet. Then you arrive and have to return to the check in to hope they can put you on the right site.

My family includes 4 generations of Rollins Pond campers starting when Rollins was just overflow for Fish Creek. I and my family welcome improvements to the park as long as it doesn't change the esthetic of the park. The following are my Feedback on the plans bullet points and additional input on Rollins Pond Camping.

1. Replace four comfort stations: #5, 15, 18, 22.
 - Replacement of comfort stations is long overdue; I hope this is the start of replacing all. I would recommend using the design currently employed at Delta Lake that includes the utility sinks. In bullet points below there is a proposal to connect the otter hollow trail to the rail trail and provide parking for hikers near or on site 257. I would propose also replacing comfort station 24 next to the otter hollow trailhead to accommodate the increased people presence in that area as a result of those changes.
2. Rehabilitate roads and include bike lane.
 - Replacement of the road is past due as well. A bike lane seems an unnecessary placation as it won't be used as intended, bikes will still use the whole road when traffic permits and the road will never be wide enough to stop a full-sized pick-up towing a trailer from crossing into a bike lane on turns or while backing into a site.
3. Replace caretaker cabin and assistant caretaker cabin.
 - I have no feelings about replacing the caretaker and asst. caretaker cabins, have at it.
4. Construct additional staff housing.
 - Based on the reasons cited in the draft plan, staff housing seems reasonable
5. Make improvements at the boat launch.
 - Boat launch improvements are needed, please do not do anything that would prevent the current rental vendor from continuing on at this site. That family is an institution and should be allowed to continue operations for as long as they would like to.
6. Construct additional vehicle parking.
 - Formalizing Whey Pond parking and improving boat launch parking makes sense. I do not agree with the need for 3-5 parking spots at each of the new comfort stations. Rollins is cherished for its rusticness, parking lots inserted throughout the park would detract from that. The current shower building and attached parking already look out of place, but as they are not visible from any camp sites it's not distracting from the experience. Per the inventory in the plan, there are already far more toilets and lavatories within walking distance than the DEC guidelines recommend. Formal parking is unnecessary. If it is found necessary, I would recommend paved space for a car or two to pull off parallel to the road as a better alternative.
7. Replace trailer dump station.
 - Replacing the current dump station is far past due, thank you.
8. Rehabilitate water system.
 - No concerns, no questions
9. Construct playground near the shower building.
 - The playground addition would be a welcome one, but please no big multi-colored monstrosity.
10. Extend internet connection through Fish Creek Campground to Rollins Pond.
 - I agree with the addition of high-speed internet accessibility per the reasons noted in the plan.
11. Re-classify area between campgrounds to Intensive Use area.
 - I have no opinion on the reclassification of land to Intensive use
12. Construct an accessible foot trail between Fish Creek Campground and Rollins Pond Campground.
 - The trail between Rollins and Fish Creek is a good idea. It should definitely be made to allow bike use to take kids riding between parks off of the vehicle road. The PDF of the UMP did not include design specs in exhibit 17 as referenced.
13. Construct an accessible foot trail to connect to Adirondack Rail Trail.
 - Connection to the rail trail is welcome, however, eliminating campsites to create parking is not. I have camped at site 256 several times, I would think that the terrains elevations on the last 3 sites are not conducive to the goal. I think the space between the otter hollow trail and the last comfort station (to the left of the comfort station when viewed from the road) is more level and would leave

a better visual barrier between the last campsites and a proposed parking area. Also, many day use patrons and campers from lower numbered sites currently park at this end and try to use empty camp sites to launch paddle boats as a short-cut to Floodwood. As part of this project, I would recommend a path to the water at the very end of Rollins Pond, off of the beginning of the otter hollow trail, from which this could happen without camper disruption. This would also provide paddlers and hikers in need with easy access to the comfort station during their trip.

14. Add utility sinks to all comfort stations.
 - Utility sinks outside comfort stations would be very welcome.
15. Tree and shrub plantings.
16. Campsite restoration.
 - I see the tree and shrub plantings and campsite restoration as one goal. I would recommend that soil, not gravel as other parks do, be added to create larger, level areas on campsites as part of the restoration process and the plantings be used to reduce erosion around this new soil. I say soil and not gravel as Rollins, to my eye, has a larger than most contingent of tent campers and the gravel bases used in other parks makes it difficult to stake down tents, wears tent bases quickly, and detracts from the deep woods feel that attracts campers to Rollins.
 - Inconsistency of campsite terrain leaves many sites unwanted by campers. This impacts attendance as many skip reserving heavily slopped sites. This also results in cancelled reservations at Rollins because of the terrain, higher elevations drain through sites to the pond, this is the case on almost all campsites at Rollins and people cancel knowing this will be an issue when rain is predicted. Improvements to the road drainage, and drainage improvements done during restoration hopefully will make campers more confident in keeping their reservations during times of inclement weather and this would also keep campers from damaging campsites by digging their own drainage channels through sites.
17. Make extended camping permits available to campers.
 - I am against seasonal camping permits. Seasonal campers would ruin the esthetic of the park. Rollins doesn't need to start looking like a trailer park. Seasonal campers are also more apt to run generators past allowed times and also to leave trailers connected to spigots for water. If seasonal camping is a foregone conclusion, may I suggest limiting it to "A" loop.
 - It is my experience that Rollins' attendance is the victim of an inefficient reservation system. There is already an inequitable situation present when trying to get camp sites at Rollins and all state park campsites for that matter. The 2-week limit, paired with the 9-month reservation window, has created this issue. Using Reserve America's website when booking campsites, the park almost always looks fully booked and for years it's actually been very difficult to find available sites. I can say this is caused in part by the most loyal Rollins campers gaming the system to get preferred dates and sites. What happens is, and I speak from experience, campers are booking dates 2 weeks prior to their preferred dates to lock in the dates they want before they would normally be available. We then, later, cancel the unwanted dates. I can see how this practice would create a large number of available sites at the last minute. I know that the reservation site does charge a fee for the cancellation after a point, but considering the low price of the booking it's a welcome price to pay for getting a preferred date and site. This has become such an issue there are 3rd party sites people are listing their cancelled dates on.

I would also like to make a couple additional suggestions;

- With the obvious exception of the family camps across the pond, limit boats on Rollins to electric motors only, removing the current 25h gas motor limit entirely.
- As other parks have done, remove hose connections from the water spigots and make trailer potable water filling available only at the dump station (I would use Delta Lake as an example). Campers stopping on the camp road to fill before parking their trailers cause many traffic issues as the road is very narrow.
- ADA height compliant toilets in ALL comfort stations, and all comfort stations having ADA stalls (grab bars, etc...). ADA is not just wheelchair bound people.

- Make “A” loop electric sites
- Increase reservation price.
- To reward loyal campers, have the option for current year campers to make reservations for next year while at the campground. This will also reduce the number of cancelled reservations due to my above comments and leave more sites available to reserve via the web for others.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Aikens, EA

Mpaikens1@yahoo.com

585-472-1716

From: [Andre Cambron](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rolling Ponds
Date: Monday, August 21, 2023 5:33:42 PM

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Hello

Based on the draft unit management plan (UMP) will Rollings Ponds be closed for these renovations?

Thanks

André Cambron

From: [Joanne & Steve French](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Campground Draft Unit Management Plan comments
Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 9:51:43 AM

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Mr Josh Houghton - Our family has camped for at least 1 week each summer at Rollins Ponds for the last 20+ years. It is a beautiful campground and we have many fond memories of the time we spent there. I realize we are past the deadline for comments, but please read this if at all possible. Our comments on the Draft Unit plan follow:

1) All of the physical improvements make sense in light of the age of the facilities. While we know you are trying to accommodate all types of campers, please try to minimize the loss of trees for the roadway improvements. Specifically, we do not feel simultaneous 2-way travel for large trailers (30 feet+ and/or fifth wheels need to be accommodated. Traffic is generally light and as long as one vehicle can pull slightly to the side of the road to let another vehicle by, we believe that is reasonable.

2) Our biggest concern is the extended stay comment, as it is not clear what is meant by this. We and many others camp at Rollins because of the availability of sites on the Pond. We know today many people will make a 2 week reservation through ReserveAmerica, show up for one week and then cancel the second, leaving the site unavailable for anyone else to book prior to cancellation of the unused week. We are concerned that an Extended Stay period (duration undefined in the Draft Plan) will make this issue even worse. We also certainly hope Extended Stay does not mean the entire camping season, as some private RV resorts allow. So without any specifics in the plan, we do not agree with an Extended Stay allowance. If some type of Extended Stay is approved, New York state residents should get a reduced rate, as we pay the taxes to fund the DEC and ultimately the parks system.

Finally, regarding the "book 2 weeks and cancel 1 at the last moment" issue, DEC should ask ReserveAmerica to provide data on the frequency of this and if there are repeat offenders, they should not be allowed to book 2 week blocks in the future.

Thanks you,
Joanne and Steve French
Rochester, NY

From: [Gregory Moore](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond Campground Comments
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 5:24:43 PM

You don't often get email from mooregm@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello,

Some comments regarding the Rolling Pond Campground Updates. I have spent approximately 50 days at Rollins pond over the past 5 years and find the following:

1.) The basis for the extended season camping is flawed and/or not fully discussed. There are 286 sites, with 16 currently excluded for rehabilitation, that leaves 270 for possible use. Looking at "Exhibit #12 - CampgroundOccupancy2019" -- for all but the early season it clearly shows that there are approximately 210 (78%) sites in use on weekdays and about 240 (89%) on weekends. Some vacancy is expected due to last minute cancellations and turnover skip days.

Thus extended stays should only be considered prior to roughly June 20th. Beyond that date, the existing rules need to be further enforced to deal with those spending more than 14 nights in peak season. Logging of license plates of both vehicles and trailers needs to be further pursued.

2.) Creation of a connecting trail to rail trail is needed. Ideally one at the north & south end of the campground to create a loop for extended running/biking and allow access to users of both ends of the campground. Parking is also needed, especially if on only one end of the campground.

3.) I oppose the creation of bike lanes. The roads should not be widened as that erodes the atmosphere and encourages speeding. Further bike lanes codify that bikers are to be separate from cars and pedestrians. Proper design should not give preference to cars anywhere outside the connecting road from Fish Creek Campground, rather cars should have to slowly work through campground without preferential treatment. Similarly bikes should not be given special treatment over pedestrians. Widening and creating dedicated lanes only creates an environment of induced demand and speeding for both cars and bikes. It takes significant time to enter/leave the campground and that is a feature, not a bug to be fixed.

4.) Boat ramp updates seem unnecessary, but certainly it is not needed to have two docks as discussed. Boats launched here are small and have minimal size/weight. Keep above water infrastructure to a minimum so as not impose on the relatively motor and infrastructure-free pond.

5.) New connecting trail between Rollins Pond and Fish Creek Campgrounds. Any trail should be built primarily with bikes in mind, particularly if it is at all meant to connect with the Rail Trail. These are great distances and that few people ever walk, while many can/do and would bike it. This mirrors the usage of the nearby and possibly connected Otter Hollow multi-use trail.

6.) EV Charging needs to be added to this proposal. One plug was added this year, which is great, but it is not enough for long-term purposes. The speed of charging is not as important as the number of dispensers. Modern chargers can be configured to work together such that they load-share. If one car is plugged in, it gets full juice, but two or more, they share. Thus multiple cars could be plugged in and left overnight and all will be charged by morning, instead of one charging quickly and blocking the charger until morning. EV drivers are willing to pay reasonable fees for access and perhaps have the paper car tag have a sticker denoting such.

7.) Thought should be given to create "quiet" areas of the campground that are free from generators and other unnecessary loud modern amenities. Generator usage has significantly increased in recent years and now it is common to be subjected to neighboring generators for the full five hours of each day. Similarly open frame generators should be banned and inverter generators should be kept below a measurable decibel rating. Alternatively shortening hours to only 2-3 in the morning would be a big step forward for some/all of the campground. There is currently no escape from the noise as both the campsites and pond are loud.

Thank you,
Greg Moore
Baldwinsville, NY

From: [Larry Koch](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Cc: [Tom Swayne](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond Campground UMP comments
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 4:39:38 PM
Attachments: [DEC letter UMP Rollins Pond 09182023.docx](#)

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Mr Houghton, attached is the Upper Saranac Lake Association comments relevant to the Rollins Pond UMP. The attached document is self explanatory but please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or thoughts.

Regards,
Larry Koch
President, USLA

From: [Kristina LaBarbera](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond Campground
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 12:54:48 PM

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My family loves staying at Rollins Pond and this year, we were unable to book our week long vacation there. It has become increasingly difficult for us to book an desired sites, even in late August. If the decision is made to made some sites longer stay, please make these sites off the water or in A loop? It is hard enough to get a site with people booking for two weeks when they only want time during the second week. Oy.

From: [Michael Demjanenko](mailto:Michael.Demjanenko@dec.sm.CampInfo)
To: dec.sm.CampInfo
Subject: Rollins Pond Draft UMP Comments - Attention Josh Houghton
Date: Monday, September 18, 2023 8:29:05 PM

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Hello Josh,

Please find below my comments on the Rollins Pond Draft UMP. Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions (315) 600-6626.

Thank you!
Mike Demjanenko

1) Restroom Reconstruction:

I often camp at a campsite near one of the restrooms that would be converted – my primary concern is that there will be excessive noise from people driving to use the new shower facilities in the evening hours and excessive light pollution from the facility. This is a primary reason why it makes sense to instead just modernize the existing shower facility at the current location – since that location already is distanced and adequately screened from surrounding campsites.

However, if these separate facilities are built, the illumination should be designed so that it illuminates only the parking and walkways and the lights are not directly visible from surrounding campsites. Furthermore, adequate screening (vegetation or other) in the direction of nearby campsites should be provided to screen surrounding campsites from vehicle lights.

2) Rail Trail Access Trail Construction

Although I am strongly in favor of connecting the campground to the rail trail, 1.8 million dollars seems an excessive amount for bridge and trail construction. A less costly design and/or rebid should be considered.

The Otter Hollow Trail is also supposed to be reconditioned – does this refer to the entire trail or just the portion between the campground and the new trail that heads to the rail trail? The existing trail between the trailhead to the bridge over Fish Creek, although popular, needs rehabilitation. The bridge is popular destination for campers to fish. The entire trail circuit (through Fish Creek Ponds) is popular among cross country runners. But the recent poor shape has degraded the ability of users. I believe the trail started to degrade significantly the year that there was a hornet nest in the middle of the trail, not too far from the north end of the campground.

3) Long Term Camping

The statistics that are being used to justify the permit of long-term camping appears to be misleading. Item 17 of the Proposed Management Section states that Rollins Pond had an average occupancy of 64% during the 2022 camping season. This implies that this number does not correspond to the number of reservable campsites. Over the years, I've seen that many of the reserved campsites remain unoccupied. The park system should instead investigate how people with unused reservations could be encouraged to cancel their unused nights so that others can take them up – this would likely affect revenue collected by the campground but it would be to the benefit of the public that wants to use the desirable campsites of the campground.

Furthermore, there is a significant difference in quality among campsites. I would say that there at least 20% of the campsites that are not desirable. And I would say that 5% of the campsites are very desirable. The 64% statistic does not take this distribution into account. Furthermore, there is a significant difference in the number of campers present during weekends versus weekdays – the

64% is just an average. I would strongly recommend against allowing extended camping beyond the two-week limit during the peak season.

If such a policy would be initiated, it should only be allowed for campsites that are leftover far after the initial reservation window has been open for some time. But even this would likely be misused. For example, a couple could get back-to-back reservations at one of the few very desirable campsites – and once the second window opens, they could combine the reservation - and therefore you'd have the state sanctioning such immoral behavior. Extended the maximum camping duration should not be permitted at the expense of other people being able to reserve some of the choice campsites.

4) Rehabilitation of Boat Launch

This is too expensive. The current launch is sufficient. There is no need for expanding the boat ramp if you are encouraging hand powered boating. Furthermore, motors should be restricted to just electric motors. It's known that some campers with motorboats have changed the numbers on their motor to make it appear that they do not exceed the 25 HP limit.

5) Utility sinks:

The lighting associated with the new utility sinks should be designed to illuminate trails/walkways to restrooms but not to shine onto the nearby campsites.

6) Replace dump station:

I don't believe this is necessary. Most campers with trailers already use the Fish Creek Ponds dump station on their departure. Campers primarily use the Rollins Pond Dump Station when they empty their grey water tanks into a cart that they pull behind their vehicle to the dump station. For this reason, the dump station should remain, but there is no need to upgrade it.

7) Modify Refuse Center

Currently, the refuse center closes at 8 PM. The fence surrounding the dumpsters is closed and electrified. I see many campers driving to take out the trash past this deadline and they end up throwing the trash over the fence in hopes of it landing within a dumpster. There are signs prohibiting this. Perhaps a better solution would be to redesign the refuse center building so that campers could enter through the building to get access to the fenced-in dumpster yard. I've seen this solution at some of the other DEC campgrounds that also have electrified fencing.

8) Fireplace Replacement

Over the years, some of the classic Adirondack stone/concrete fireplaces have been replaced with metal rings. The metal fire rings are awful – the overwhelming consensus is that the original Adirondack fireplace design is by far the preferred design. Budget should be provided to restore these back to the stone/concrete variety. It seems that most handicapped campsites now have metal fire rings. Has anyone interviewed handicapped campers to assess which type of fireplace they would prefer? I can't imagine that any marginal benefit in accessibility that a metal fire ring could provide would outweigh the camping experience in front of a classic Adirondack fireplace. Budget should be provided to confirm that the classic Adirondack fireplaces should be restored at the handicapped campsites as well.

9) Wi-Fi Hotspots

Since an internet connection is being extended to the campground, the plan should consider providing one or more bandwidth-limited Wi-Fi hot-spots in the campground. Since cell phone coverage is practically non-existent at the campground, this could be a way for campers to communicate with family back home, check-in at work, check weather forecasts, etc. Currently, you see people drive back and forth through the campground trying to find the best cell reception – which as I mentioned, is spotty at best.

From: [Jose Deondarza](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond draft UMP comments
Date: Monday, August 21, 2023 4:40:00 PM

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

To Josh Houghton,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft UMP for Rollins Pond. We have camped there annually for over 15 years now and always enjoy our time there.

I have only a few comments specifically about the draft plan suggestions.

1. Paving - an excellent and much needed plan. A bike lane, esp. between FC and RP, would be great as well.
2. comfort stations sinks sound like a good idea
3. Not in favor of extended camping permits. As it is, our greatest complaint with Rollins Pond is the reservation system that makes it almost impossible to gain access to one of the prime sites in Loop with sites 10-36. Very frustrating to see some of these sites empty (but reserved, so unavailable). We are online 9 months beforehand to the second, and rarely succeed. Is there a "cheat" that people use? We see the same person in one of these sites every year. Would it be possible to allow NY state residents an early-registration period?

Thanks for the time! Jose de Ondarza

From: [Donna Corbett](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond draft UMP
Date: Monday, August 21, 2023 8:52:18 PM

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Hello Josh Houghton,

The proposed extended stay option at Rollins Pond will only make it so much more difficult for (tent) campers who want to stay a week or two. It is difficult enough to reserve any time as it is. If there are concerns about vacancies it may be because in order to “beat the system” people often reserve two weeks and only stay for one. Many times these people don’t cancel the unwanted week causing all the vacancies that occur. Please DO NOT add the extended stay option, keep the park available to as many campers as possible throughout the season. Thank you

From: [Chris Keniston](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond Draft UMP
Date: Sunday, August 27, 2023 12:25:07 PM

You don't often get email from ckeniston@roadrunner.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

This is probably our favorite campground in the entire state of New York and we're glad to see it is finally getting some upgrades! We whole heartedly offer our support for the current Draft UMP and encourage DEC to ensure there is a bike friendly connector trail to the future Adirondack Rail Trail. We are very familiar with this area and as residents of Tupper Lake, NY are hoping this connector trail is established on the south end of the pond, between Rollins Pond and Fish Creek Campgrounds, where it can be easily accessed by visitors of both campgrounds. Thanks for the opportunity to provide input into the this plan!

Chris & Mary Keniston
188 Washington Street
Tupper Lake, NY

From: [PATRICIA HALL](#)
To: SLMP_UMP_Comments@apa.ny.gov
Subject: Rollins Pond Extended Stay comments
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 11:45:13 AM

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I would like to add to the public comment on the test permits for longer term camping at Rollins Pond.

Our family has been camping at Rollins Pond for over 20 years. It has ALWAYS been difficult to get a campsite at Rollins Pond - we figure out when we want to go camping the next year and at 9am 9 months to the day we are on line trying to get a site. We have had sites throughout the campground. And yes - we have our favorite sites but we adjust to what's available every year. We do find it frustrating to see prime water sites empty/not closed for refurbishment that we would have loved to have reserved. We also find it frustrating to see sites with camping equipment left for days with nobody there.

I am OPPOSED to longer term campsites at Rollins Pond. It is difficult to get a site now - people being able to reserve a site for longer will just make it so fewer people can have access to the campground. Just because someone CAN afford to buy an extended stay campsite doesn't mean we should make it an option to limit others from enjoying the campground.

I think it would be interesting to have someone walk the campground throughout the summer and talk to the campers that are there at Rollins Pond using the campground - get their thoughts and suggestions. I participated in the current survey for Rollins Pond - but after going through two links to get to the survey - I felt like they really didn't want our input. Why a survey wasn't given at the time of check-in at Rollins this year - again to get input from the people who use the campground.

So again I will say - I am OPPOSED to long term campsites at Rollins. The current reservation system is flawed but adding long term sites will just make it more difficult for more people to use the facility.

Thank you - Patricia Hall

Sent from my iPad



Executive Director
Gerald W. Delaney
326 Downs Road
Cadyville, NY 12918
518-569-7800

gdelaneylgrb@gmail.com

Chair
Brian McDonnell
363 State Route 86
Paul Smiths, NY 12970
518-891-1176

adkmcdonnell@gmail.com

Vice Chair
Carrie Tuttle
405B Columbian RD
Cranberry Lake, NY 12927
315-778-8312

ctuttle@danc.org

September 18, 2023

To: Megan Phillips, Deputy Director

Ms Phillips, the Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board seeks to comment on both Rollins Pond and Golden Beach Campsite Unit Management Plans.

Local government is supportive of upgrading these facilities. What was apparent from the presentations, is, these Administrative areas were improperly mapped at the time of the adoption of the Adirondack Park Act. As these campgrounds were in existence prior to the APA Act, Local Government is supportive of changing these boundaries of the Administrative use areas of Rollins Pond and Golden Beach.

What we believe was missing in these presentations was the reasons for removing some of the Administrative use area in these Campgrounds. We believe the public should know why these areas are being removed. It was explained in great detail why these boundary changes should be made to the areas that clearly were not properly mapped 50 years ago. No time was given in the presentations, for why the areas being removed were not appropriate. In the spirit of transparency, the people of the State of New York should hear why these areas no longer belong being classified as Administrative Use.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Gerald Delaney

Executive Director

From: [Michael McCabe](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond improvements
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 10:25:11 PM

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Just wanted to let you or someone know the data provided to anyone was a grade above excellent. It was easy to read and understand, and the provided layout 'pictures' of Rollins was very helpful in getting the big picture.

The potential improvements were great to read and provided info on how things could be improved for users of the park. Was surprised by the cost to build a bridge over the Rollins/Floodwood channel, but would open up more walking/hiking trails. I wish there was one that would run alongside Whey Pond so one could 'walk-around-the-block' so to speak. This could connect with the existing one starting at the campground's far end back to the main road allowing a complete circle instead of back-tracking.

Making all the roads better and perhaps wider in places so trucks/trailers could bypass each other when arriving/leaving. The shoulders need to be improved getting rid of the 'drop-offs' that are everywhere besides the existing road, and another big improvement would be making the entrance to each site better/easier to back in a trailer. Some are hell (been there-done that). There are some sites that also have large rock protrusions that make trailer placement difficult (156).

Trees that overhang the roadway also can be hit by the trailers as they pass by. Overhanging tree limbs at/in the sites should be a certain height from the ground to avoid this as well.

Limbs in the sites themselves can protrude into the site making it difficult to locate a trailer, or the trailer's slide outs.

Opening up/ making larger the 'dump' station for Rollins will cut down on the amount of trailers going to the Fish Creek one upon leaving. The Rollins on is too tight to utilize for bigger/longer trailers.

Gray water being dumped at the camp sites is bad, but I noticed that sites at Sweetwater Forest Cape Cod campground each had a barrel sunken into the ground that was open on the bottom and filled with fine stones/gravel that campers could use for the gray water. A plastic trash can cover was over it with a hole cut into it so the tank hose could be inserted full time. 'Black waste' still went to the dumping station.

Again, a great job putting the info out, and I hope things will progress over time at Rollins. We have used it for 15-20 years.

--

Michael P. McCabe
junewayskier@gmail.com
Chittenango, NY

From: [Brandon Lewis](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond long term permits
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 4:29:05 PM

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My name is Brandon P. Lewis, from Brockport NY, I am in favor of offering long term camping permits for Rollins pond. If people are doing it anyways, might as well make an official process and make it 'legal'.

I would very much be in favor of some kind of lottery system or any method that might give NY citizens preference for the parks we love so much!

Love Rollins pond, we didn't get a chance to make it up there yet this year but my family absolutely loves canoeing and camping there.

Thanks!

Brandon

From: [Mike](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#); John.Houghton@dec.ny.gov
Subject: Rollins Pond Public Campground DRAFT UMP 2023 - Comments.
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 8:15:41 PM

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August 29, 2023

I've had the opportunity to review the Draft UMP for the Rollins Pond Public Campground and would like to offer a few thoughts and comments below for your consideration. The draft document appears thorough and is well written, with suitable exhibits and figures.

I've had the opportunity to camp at the Rollins Pond campground numerous times over the last 60+ years. Every time was an enjoyable experience, even on those cold, rainy days in late August.

All state campgrounds need continuous maintenance and regular modernization of the facilities. Therefore, all the proposed management actions seem reasonable and should be acted on as funding is available.

I would like to comment on the proposed connector trail from the campground to the Adirondack Rail Trail. This action item should be carried into the Final UMP with some additional emphasis. Given the effort and expense the New York State is undertaking to construct the Adirondack Rail Trail from Lake Placid to Tupper Lake, families and groups camping at Rollins Pond and Fish Creek should have the opportunity to easily access the rail trail from the campground rather than driving to a trailhead elsewhere. The Adirondack Rail Trail will provide families and groups a unique and safe way to exercise and enjoy the natural world. Given the increasing use of rail trails throughout New York State and the country, the Adirondack Rail Trail once completed in 2025 will likely become a very popular vacation destination.

Specific comments:

1. Add the connector trail to the Proposed Management Action box on page ii.
2. Page 28 Action #13 - Add language that the connector trail should be constructed using the same design criteria as the rail trail (suitable drainage, width, subbase, compacted stone dust, etc.)
3. The estimated \$1.8 Million cost of the connector trail bridge over the outlet to Rollins Pond is obviously significant and may be prohibitive. What is it based on? Are there other possible ways to fund it, such as the Rail Trail's budget, rather than the Rollins Pond Campground capital budget?
4. Exhibit #14 should include the rail trail connector Item #13.
5. Exhibit #15 - The noted reclassification of the area of the connector trail from wild forest to intensive use (to allow for the connector) should be approved and retained in the Final UMP.
6. Exhibit #17 should include a design drawing for the proposed connector trail and the bridge.
7. The 2019 Saranac Lake Wild Forest UMP suggest that a connector trail from the south end of the Rollins Pond Campground to the Adirondack Rail Trail be completed (see Figure 8 in that document). What is the status of that proposal. Our wetlands an issue with that proposal?

8. Item #17 Proposed extended camping permit. This should be limited to the less desirable sites (non-lake side) and require full time overnight occupancy. I realize this is to increase the usage of underutilized sites but it may not be necessary due to to possible increase demand for camping sites from families and groups wanting to access the rail trail.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document. I trust all comments received will be carefully considered in the completion of the Final Rollins Pond Public Campground UMP. I can be reached at mjkomoroske@aol.com or 518-527-4630 if there are any questions on the above comments.

Mike Komoroske

From: [TO](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond Public Campground UMP public comments submission
Date: Monday, September 18, 2023 4:11:24 PM
Attachments: [Rollins Pond UMP comments 2023-09-18.pdf](#)

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Mr. Josh Houghton,

Please find my public comments attached to this message. I appreciate the opportunity to be informed and to provide input on the proposal. Rollins Pond is my favorite campground which I have camped in for many, many decades! Rollins Pond is near and dear to my heart!

Thanks,
Nancy Post

From: [Steven McCullough](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond reservations
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 10:11:15 AM

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To Josh Houghton;

My Name is Steven McCullough and I reside in the town of Moreau in NY.

I enjoy camping in the Rollins Pond campground because it's close to all the paddling and hiking that I wish to do.

Trying to get a reservation is already a hassle and it's frustrating to see people abuse the system.

Instead of REWARDING BAD BEHAVIOR, the DEC should be working to STOP THE RESERVATION ABUSE.

Were you born stupid or is it a goal you are trying to attain?

Sorry to be nasty but I'm also sick of paddling through a "completely booked" camping area with numerous empty sites and the abuse accepted by the DEC and the reservation system you have contracted with.



Adirondack Rail Trail Association
P.O. Box 1081
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

September 18, 2023

Josh Houghton, EPS2 (NR)
NYS DEC Bureau of Recreation
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-5253

Dear Mr. Houghton,

I am writing on behalf of the Adirondack Rail Trail Association to express our view on the proposed accessible trail and bridge as outlined in the Rollins Pond Draft Unit Management Plan (UMP). We appreciate the efforts of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in ensuring the enhancement of recreational opportunities in the Adirondacks.

We have concerns regarding the discrepancy in terminology between the approved Remsen-Lake Placid UMP and the Rollins Pond UMP. The Remsen-Lake Placid plan designates the connected as a "snowmobile trail", while the draft Rollins Pond UMP refers to it as a "foot trail." Ensuring consistency in the trail's designation is vital to maintaining a clear and unified vision for the Adirondack Rail Trail and its connected pathways.

The Adirondack Rail Trail Stakeholders group met on November 8, 2016, and the following statement was adopted: *DEC will develop the trail system for year round use and access to the recreational trail through the: a. Saranac Lakes Wild Forest UMP b. Fish Creek/Rollins Pond Campgrounds UMP.*

We support the construction of an accessible trail to connect to the Adirondack Rail Trail. However, we firmly believe that this trail, when designed to be ADA compliant, must also be conducive for snowmobiles, bicycles, and all non-motorized traffic. Only then will it align with the spirit of inclusivity and expanded access that the Adirondack Rail Trail represents.

We want to emphasize our strong support for the proposed bridge over the outlet of Rollins Pond, which is a crucial link in creating an accessible and integrated trail network. Furthermore, we encourage the allocation of necessary funding to ensure that this bridge accommodates the diverse range of users we are advocating for, including snowmobilers, cyclists, and individuals with disabilities.

We appreciate your dedication to improving outdoor recreational opportunities in the Adirondacks and your commitment to creating a trail system that welcomes diverse user groups. We look forward to continued collaboration and are hopeful that our shared vision for an inclusive and accessible Adirondack Rail Trail network will come to fruition.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and for your ongoing work to protect and enhance the Adirondack Park.

Sincerely,

Brian Woods
Executive Director
Adirondack Rail Trail Association
brianw@adirondackrailtrail.org
518-466-3400

CC: Board of Directors, Adirondack Rail Trail Association

**Rollins Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan
Public Comments - 18 September 2023**

I have camped at beloved Rollins Pond since approximately 1967, as a resident of NJ, NY and now MD (21009). I love its rustic, unplugged, peaceful, natural environment and never want to see that change (no site utility hookups, etc.). Rustic camping brings a certain type of camper to the park. Home conveniences would turn a tranquil Rollins into a honkytonk, boardwalk-like disaster.

I cannot simply provide an agree/disagree answer to the survey questions. Each question needs important considerations and concerns briefly expounded upon. Although appreciated, the Unit Management Plan (UMP) does not provide specific details for the proposed changes, only a high-level overview. The architectural drawings on pages 75-76 are not clear and lack details, footprint size, dimensions, etc. – each drawing needs its own page. Therefore, we do not know exactly what we might be agreeing to without sufficient details.

Rollins has successfully operated for over 70 years in its simple, rustic manner. Small changes such as pit to flush toilet conversions, lights in the bathrooms, a central trash/recycling center and a shower building have made sense and been unobtrusive. Rollins continues to be immensely popular in its current rustic state. Making many 21 century changes will destroy this legacy and experience. Convenience campers have magnitudes of alternative choices (many private campgrounds, etc.) which rustic campers do not have.

*In places I list agreement or trusting DEC judgement, I **only** provide support if it will be designed and built in a way that blends with the rustic environment and using as small a footprint as possible, and destroying only very little additional habitat if any. It must be a priority to limit the increase of impervious surfaces and to not decrease the natural habitat. I love the dark brown buildings and the mustard yellow writing on the signage.

1. Replacement of four restrooms (5, 15, 18, 22 – map needs to show numbered comfort stations so their location in the campground is identifiable):
 - a. The proposed size of the new comfort stations is **too large**, with too many shower stalls and too large a parking area. The comfort station replacement should supplement, not replace, the existing shower facility, especially the latter being offset from campsites. The proposed new stations would require significant loss of natural habitat and negatively change the campsite environment. It would no longer be rustic. The comfort stations should satisfy a biological necessity in a most minimally intrusive manner (as they currently do) and not be designed as an attraction.
 - b. I do agree with improving water efficiency and end-of-season pipe draining, and accessibility. I do not know what criteria led to a fair/poor rating since needs (other than accessibility) have been met for over 70 years. The comfort stations are not modern, but they meet the basic needs.
 - c. All public buildings should be using LED lighting. Ease of bathroom cleaning and maintaining sanitary conditions should be a priority. A waste basket would be useful in the ladies bathroom. No paper towels. I prefer no hand driers but if they are installed, they should not be noisy. Bathroom stalls should have enough room to change clothes and not be so small that knees are only a few inches from a door when seated – it is necessary to accommodate wide and tall people. Hooks in toilet/shower stalls, next to sinks, and along the walls would be very beneficial. Costs of showers should be kept low or be free (best). Sink faucets should require limited contact (i.e. push not turn on, or motion-sensitive (best)) and water should only come out for a timed duration to reduce waste.
 - d. I assume the UMP-noted 2.5 mile drive to the shower building is from the furthest campsite #257. The drive is (much) shorter for most other campers. I did not observe traffic congestion due to the shower facility or the nearby trash/recycling facility during past visits. The investment into the

**Rollins Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan
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existing shower building should not be wasted. The current shower building can continue to bring cleanliness options to campers. Two showers for every 25 sites is a minimum and far from excessive. So adding 3 or 4 shower stalls to a few comfort stations strategically spread across the campground would supplement the existing shower building and increase convenient access.

- e. Parking should start out with only 2 spots maximum.
2. Rehabilitation of campground roads, including a bike lane:
 - a. Agree the roads need improvement and paving. Please use the most environmental-friendly paving material possible since runoff ends up in Rollins Pond. Roads should be widened by no more than 3 feet (if at all) to remain unobtrusive. Unsure how a bike lane can exist without making the roads way too wide. Oversized vehicles and camping units should be discouraged and not accommodated. The proposed trail between Rollins and Fish Creek campgrounds will likely offset some bicycle traffic on the roads.
3. Replacement of caretaker's cabin and assistant caretaker's cabin:
 - a. Trusting this is necessary.*
4. Construction of additional staff housing:
 - a. Trusting this is necessary.*
5. Improvements at the boat launch:
 - a. Although a wooden dock is more aesthetically pleasing, I understand limiting maintenance with aluminum docks. Hopefully a concrete ramp won't severely crack during frigid winters.
 - b. An additional improvement would be to add a water quality monitoring station in the launch area since the water movement appears to flow to that end of the lake and oil/gas is frequently visible on top of the water.
6. Construction of additional vehicle parking:
 - a. People bringing multiple vehicles to the campground should be discouraged, not encouraged. Rollins Pond and its surroundings will be harmed by additional impervious surfaces and the pollution-runoff they generate. More parking spots will encourage more vehicles.
 - b. Start with only 2 parking spots at restrooms and no more than 6 spots at Whey Pond. Unless it has recently changed, I hardly ever see anyone on Whey Pond. Also, since Whey Pond is smaller than Rollins Pond and even more pristine, motorized boats should be banned.
7. Replacement of trailer dumping station:
 - a. Trusting this is necessary.*
8. Rehabilitation of water system:
 - a. Trusting this is necessary.* Please choose pumps that do not contribute to noise pollution.
9. Construction of playground near shower building:
 - a. Agree since it won't be on top of campsites making it less disruptive, and parking is already available. Makes sense if the shower building is kept open, which it absolutely should be! Playground hours should be dawn to dusk.
 - b. A small pavilion near the existing shower building and playground would be ok, but needs to not turn into a hangout or unruly center. This would require ranger monitoring. Children should learn

Rollins Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan
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to enjoy nature and to entertain themselves in simple ways, as we did with my family and friends for decades. An excellent change of pace for otherwise overactive lifestyles.

10. Extension of internet connection from Fish Creek Pond campground to Rollins Pond for administrative purposes:
 - a. Agree if it is only for administration and doesn't distract employees from their duties. Agree that internet connection should not be made available to campers.
11. Reclassify area between Fish Creek Pond and Rollins Pond Campgrounds to intensive use area:
 - a. Agree if it is to only retrofit this designation to already constructed structures and not permitting further damage to the wonderful tall pine tree lined habitat viewed on the drive between the campgrounds. A beautiful treasure to be preserved and protected!
12. Construction of an accessible foot trail between Fish Creek and Rollins Pond Campgrounds:
 - a. Agree with proposal which states design sensitivity to the natural environment. Unless it makes it too dangerous for walkers or degrades the trail, this could provide bikers an alternative to riding on roads. As with all trails, especially as more of them connect, accessibility can introduce security concerns. Trail monitoring and sign in/out registers should be considered. This applies to all trails mentioned in the UMP.
13. Construction of trail bridge to connect to the Adirondack Rail Trail:
 - a. Trusting DEC's judgement.* The trail connection should not be near Rollins Pond campsites to improve campers' safety and security (body and belongings) from transient hikers. The latter is my biggest concern, especially since it's at the end of the campground and furthest away from ranger help. What would prevent hikers from using the comfort station at that end of the campground?
 - b. Concerned and unclear about the number of outside people this will bring to closer proximity to Rollins such that a ranger station and parking would be necessary. Lacking information to feel completely comfortable with this change. That said I don't want habitat damage by bushwacking between trails.
14. Add utility sinks to exterior of all comfort station buildings:
 - a. Strongly agree, good idea to help preserve the natural habitat and reduce pollution. I just used such a utility sink at Pocomoke River state campground in MD.
15. Extended camping stays (more than 14 nights) for campers:
 - a. Strongly **disagree!** This would make obtaining reservations inequitable and even more difficult than it is now. Vacations require planning ahead and cannot rely on other's last-minute cancellation in hopes of securing a desirable campsite. See explanation at end of this numeric listing.
 - b. If this proceeds, it should **only** include off-water and frequently unused on-water sites (the latter data should be readily available). Absolutely no extended stays for constantly booked and popular on-water sites.
16. Planting of trees and shrubs:
 - a. Strongly agree! Especially between campsites for increased privacy. Tree and shrub selections should provide the most value (especially food) for wildlife including pollinators. A pollinator garden in the shower building vicinity (sun exposure) would be wonderful!

**Rollins Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan
Public Comments - 18 September 2023**

17. Restoration of existing campsites:

- a. Strongly agree! Focus should be on soil stability, erosion control, selective pruning for some lake visibility (so campers don't do it), monitoring and fining those who leave sites in a degraded (i.e. dug up, damaged trees) or littered state.
- b. Sites should be inspected after each camper's departure.
- c. If not already done, track and maintain specific notes about each site's characteristics in a database, especially areas of concern and vulnerabilities per site.
- d. Sites should not be huge. Accommodate up to 28' campers. 40' campers are too huge for Rollins Pond sites and roads.
- e. The CCC-built fireplaces are wonderful! Restoration of degraded fireplaces should maintain the original characteristics!

No Extended Stays

The campground occupancy stats listed in the UMP are not granular enough to draw accurate conclusions. The need is not for extended stays. The need is to improve poorly situated or constructed on-water sites and to increase off-water site attraction. The reservation data should easily reveal the unpopular sites, which most likely are the significant contributors to lower campground occupancy. If extended stays are put into place, only a handful of people will be staying on the pristine sites – they might as well make it their second home. It is already impossible to get a RSVP for any of the most desirable sites. I've tried and been unsuccessful. Sites disappear online within minutes when reservations open in the morning when trying to reserve 8 months in advance. It is already extremely frustrating!

58 (20%) out of 287 sites are off-water (again, likely large root cause of unoccupied sites). Transporting kayaks or canoes to the boat launch for water access from deep inside Rollins is inconvenient at best, and increases traffic and parking needs. The boat launch is too busy for a restful sit-by-the-water to read and relax option. This makes off-water sites undesirable. To increase their bookings, I suggest:

- Water access through undesirable on-water sites (instead of the on-water site sitting idle) at strategic locations throughout the campground, perhaps near the restrooms or every 30 campsites.
- Discounts, such as paying for 6 nights and getting the 7th night free, early season discounts (this could help June occupancy for all sites), etc.
- Build a lean-to on a handful of the off-water sites. This could help through hikers on the connecting trails.

Many on-water sites do not have easy (or any) visibility of the lake, get little sunlight, or have a long, sometimes steep, trail to reach the lake. Best estimate is approximately 20-30% of the on-water sites are highly desirable. It is impossible to get a reservation for these desirable sites (especially during peak season). Hopefully, all site RSVPs are obtained above board via the online RSVP system. My family never had a problem getting a desirable site up to the early 2000s. I hope at least a couple more times over the next decade I will achieve a miracle and camp on a favorite site before I am no longer able to physically camp.

Additional suggestions:

- Have an emergency phone that only connects to a 24x7 ranger station installed in each new comfort station (or other strategically-located comfort station) since cell phone connectivity is spotty (if available at all) and unreliable. Four strategically-placed AED units should be available – the new comfort stations might be good locations.

**Rollins Pond Public Campground Unit Management Plan
Public Comments - 18 September 2023**

- Have rangers continue to frequently and slowly drive through the campground to monitor noise, fire danger, camper behavior, etc., 24x7. Using small, electric vehicles (even golf carts) would be perfect!
- Rollins Pond and Fish Creek campgrounds should not be degraded to accommodate supersized vehicles and camping units.
- Enable retirees to be helpful additions to staff as camp hosts.

From: [Bob Ellison](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins pond ump comments
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2023 7:17:02 PM

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Hello,

I have a couple comments. The bridge to connect to the rail trail, is that the best use of 1,800,000? It seems like a large expense when there is access at Floodwood. It also would add traffic to the campground roads, that would need to traverse the entire campground.

The proposal to replace the dumpstation is great. It would reduce strain on the Fish Creek dump station.

Has there been any consideration to add a facility to dump portable tote tanks somewhere central inside the campground. Possibly at the existing shower building if it will be closed since it has a septic facility . This would reduce the length of the drive pulling a portable tank through the campground to the dump station.

Thank you
Bob Ellison
Sauquoit NY

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

September 14, 2023

Mr. Josh Houghton
NYS DEC Bureau of Recreation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-5253

Re: Comment on the Draft Unit Management Plan for Rollins Pond

Dear Mr. Houghton,

I am writing to you to provide my feedback on the Draft Unit Management Plan for Rollins Pond Campground. I appreciate the opportunity to give feedback and offer input to these plans. I am a long time camping enthusiast and have been camping at Rollins Pond for over 40 years.

My main reason for writing to you is to give feedback on **item 17** on the proposed project list.

Item 17 – Make seasonal camping permits available to campers: I oppose issuing seasonal camping permits for the Rollins Pond Campground. The reason given in the Draft UMP is to improve occupancy rates (64% in 2022) without creating an inequitable situation for other campers. When evaluating occupancy rates consideration should be given that approximately 20% of Rollin Pond's 286 campsites are "off water" sites. These sites are less desirable for the majority of campers and are often vacant. There are water sites that are of a less desirable configuration that are also often vacant. This lowers the occupancy statistics but would not likely change if seasonal permits were allowed.

I believe that issuing seasonal camping permits will do little improve occupancy rates and will negatively impact the majority of campers looking to reserve a site. It is likely that seasonal permit holders will attempt to book the most desirable water sites. If successful, it will eliminate these prime sites from being available to multiple different campers throughout the season. This will do little to improve occupancy since these prime sites are already fully booked throughout the entire camping season.

Another negative is that many seasonal permit holders will likely park a trailer on their site but will not actually be present the entire time the permit is in effect. Seasonal permit holders will likely use their site sporadically and on weekends with the site being unoccupied the remainder of the time. This does a disservice to other campers wanting to reserve a prime site.

It has become extremely difficult to reserve a prime water site even in May and early June. From late June – Labor Day it is nearly impossible to reserve these sites even when attempting to book 9 months in advance. The current policy of 14 days maximum stay on any one reservation is more than adequate. Please do not make a difficult situation worse by issuing extended stay camping permits.

The other project I have concerns with is **item 13**.

Item 13 – Construct trail bridge to connect to Adirondack Rail Trail: Given the information provided it is not clear what the benefit is of connecting the campground to the ADK Rail Trail. The \$1,800,000 estimated cost for this project seems hard to justify for what might be limited benefit. A potential concern is the loon breeding area (Exhibit #11) that is near the proposed bridge location. On the surface, it doesn't make sense to make this sensitive area more accessible to human traffic. I feel this item warrants further evaluation and at the very least should be given a low priority. The high cost of this project would fund a number of more valuable projects on the proposed list.

On the positive side I support the majority of the proposed projects in the Rollins Pond UMP. There are several that I believe would be candidates for higher priority. These are:

Item 1 - Replace four comfort stations #5, 15, 18, 22: Most of the rest room facilities within the campground are dated and are probably difficult to clean and maintain. I like the inclusion of shower facilities within each building in addition to toilet facilities.

Item 2 – Rehabilitate roads and include bike lane: This is must do project. The roads and shoulders throughout the campground are in rough condition, creating unsafe conditions for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. The roads within Rollins Pond Campground are designated as two way traffic and are generally narrow with minimal leeway for two vehicles towing trailers to pass each other. In most areas there is no room for one vehicle to move over to let another vehicle safely pass in the opposite direction. This is more problematic on sharp bends in the road (ex. near sites 35-37). Widening the shoulders will improve safety and facilitate backing camping trailers into individual camp sites.

Another suggestion that could be integrated into roadway rehabilitation is to improve the accessibility and safety of backing in trailers into individual sites. Some selective removal of a few trees/obstacles near the entrance to some sites would improve the ease of backing in trailers and would open up more sites to a wider group of campers.

Item 7 – Replace trailer dump station: This should be a higher priority project. The current dump station is not functional for most camping trailers. While the Fish Creek dump station can be used, having an upgraded dump station at Rollins Pond will relieve the congestion at the Fish Creek facility during peak times of the day and would be a valuable enhancement to the facility.

Item 8 – Add utility sinks to all comfort stations: This low cost item makes good sense. I have camped at campgrounds with these sinks and they are regularly in use.

Items 15/16 – Tree/shrub planting and campsite restoration: Both of these line items make good sense for relatively low cost. I fully support the restoration of a moderate number of campsites annually.

Thank you once again for allowing the public to give feedback on the proposed UMP for Rollins Pond and for taking that feedback into consideration before finalizing the plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Stenlake
Massena, NY

From: [Bev Stellges](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond UMP
Date: Monday, August 21, 2023 12:43:33 PM

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I have not read the whole UMP for Rollins Pond but find it absolutely ridiculous that you have wasted time and money to do this. How many years ago did you write an UMP for the Saranac Lake Wild Forest where campsites on Follensby Clear we're going to be closed to conform with the 1/4 mile apart regulation and campsites on Pollywog were going to be closed? Nothing has been done! How many years ago was the UMP for Buck Pond State Park written to improve the disgusting 1950's bathrooms and the absolutely horrible dump station? Nothing has been done! Instead the DEC built a new campground at the old Frontier property!! Who decides that these UMP's should be written? And why hasn't anything been done to follow those already written?? Bev Stellges

Sent from my iPad

Josh Houghton, Division of Operations
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation,
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233

Re: Comments on Rollins Pond UMP

August 27, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Rollins Pond UMP. I have stayed at Rollins Pond many times and written about some of the issues I have had. Hopefully the work done under the UMP will address my issue. Below are comments on the UMP for your consideration:

Item #1, sheet 23: Wash stations at each bathhouse would be a great addition. This prevents lots of contaminated water from being dropped near campsites/pond. I assume hot water will be included?

Item #2, page 24: Roadway reconstruction addresses runoff. Currently there are ditches parallel to the road (where drivers drive to avoid oncoming vehicles) that drain into the entrances of campsites, flooding sites and causing erosion of the site and discharge contaminated runoff down the paths into the Pond. This conflicts with DEC's own guidance on stormwater and erosion control. Implementation of this goal is paramount.

Note that sheet 76 with road detail is not legible. Hopefully the message in the text is reflected in the profile and plans (when done).

Item #13, page 28: trail to Adirondack Rail trail and entrance booth. Both seem very desirable although the booth may or may not be required. The question being how many people not staying at Rollins would enter from this path. If the rail trail becomes very popular it is likely lots of hikers/bikers looking for campsites may enter from this direction.

In addition a trail to Floodwood Mountain from Rollins Pond campground would be a nice feature to add to the list of things available. The drive to the current trailhead makes it somewhat undesirable.

Item 14, page 28: "ditto": Wash stations at each bathhouse would be a great addition. This prevents lots of contaminated water from being dropped near campsites/pond. I assume hot water will be included?

Item #15, page 28: Trees and shrubs.

Although this is a great idea and very desirable I think that the fact that campers beat a path to the lake inhibits vegetation. Some form of hardening or steps might be included to reduce erosion along the pathway to the lake.

Item #16, page 29: campsite restoration:

It seems that campsite rehabilitation takes place after letting the site rest for a season or two. From the sites I have seen nothing is done but let them rest. It would seem best to do improvements as soon as a site is closed. My reasons:

- Cover roots and create drainage to low, vegetated areas to allow ground water recharge and filtering of water before it gets into the pond. This would require bringing in material. This would reduce contamination to the pond and allow soils to stabilize prior to use.
- Soil cover in the beginning of restoration would allow natural vegetation to grow and / or allow seeding and growth prior to reuse of the site.
- Improving the entrance area to prevent road runoff from entering the site and discharging stormwater to a low area (not directly to the pond!). This would allow the entrance soil (stone?) to stabilize prior to future use and reduce contaminated water entering the pond.

Item #17, page 29 and sheet 64, exhibit #12: The idea of allowing a season-long reservation ("extend camping permits") of a site is crazy. The argument that the sites are at a low percentage (64%) of use does not address the two priority months of July and August. We have tried for weeks to get a water site reservation with little to no luck. The chart on sheet #37 shows lots of use from June 22 to Sept. 5. Your numbers quoted (64%) are for occupancy for the year? What is the usage rate of water sites from June 22 to Sept. 5? How about sites reserved, as if the site has been reserved it is not available and should be considered occupied, Also the occupancy sheet says average occupancy at 71% and weekend at 64%. This is hard to believe.

I am **strongly opposed** to this idea! Why should a site be reserved for the year and probably rarely used when others users are not able to reserve a site?

General comment; The showers are a waste of water (chlorinated) and energy (hot water). The showers should have a way to turn them off as well as controlling the temperature. The water runs long after showers are completed and they are often hotter/colder than many prefer.

Please include me on any notice, hearing announcement, meeting, etc that may be scheduled regarding Rollins Pond Campground. My address and phone number:

JEFlaherty50@gmail.com

518-860-5535(c)

627 Kinns Road

Clifton Park, NY 12065

Thank you again for your efforts for considering the environment and recreational use of our State lands. Please feel free to call me if you or your staff should want clarification on any of my comments.

Jim Flaherty

From: [Lake Vid](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond UMP
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 6:28:43 PM

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I wish to comment on the proposed Rollins Pond UMP.

I agree that improvements to the admin Wi-Fi and staff housing are warranted. I do not agree with the proposal to widen the campground roads. Please repair the existing road. Widening the road will only lead to vehicles driving faster - and the speeding in the campground is already out of control.

I am strongly opposed to any plan to extend the camping permits beyond the current 14 day stay limit.

Extended stay campers should go to KOA or Little Wolf Pond or a private campground. It is very unfair to others to allow a few to monopolize the sites.

Extended stay campers will abuse the privilege (as some already do) by claiming a site for weeks so they are ensured to have a weekend getaway. Extended stay campers will also damage the sites with prolonged use, and with the incessant trenching that goes on already.

If campers are already abusing the current rules Do Not reward them with variances...instead, enforce the existing rules! Fish Creek and Rollins have already become one giant trailer park. Do not encourage this trend!

Regards,
Chas Billingsley

From: [Sympatico](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond Unit Management Plan Draft
Date: Tuesday, August 22, 2023 5:19:24 PM

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Thank you for sharing the draft Rollins Pond Unit Management Plan, and providing an opportunity to comment. Four generations of my family have been enjoying camping at Rollins every summer for about the past 60 years. I have been there with my parents, kids, and grandkids. Rollins Pond is truly a special place.

Before providing my comments on the plan, I would also like to take this opportunity to pass on our appreciation for the staff who helped us this summer when we experienced a severe electrical storm. Lightening hit a tree at our site and our dog and granddaughter suffered an indirect hit through the ground - I personally saw the electrical arc leave the ground. Luckily we were all OK, but the local staff were very helpful in checking out the safety of our site and making sure we had the information we needed to seek medical attention as a precaution after the event.

Here are a few comments about the management plan that I hope you will consider. Overall the plan is very well done and provides useful context for the recommendations.

Trails

The proposal to build additional parking and potentially a ticket booth at the Otter Hollow Loop trailhead would negatively impact the campground and campers. There are several references in the document to minimizing motorized vehicle traffic in the campground. The Otter Hollow Loop trailhead is at the very end of the campground road (dead end with turnaround loop); providing parking and a formal trail entrance booth would encourage too much day use and it is unlikely that only a few parking spots would be sufficient. Over use would lead to more cars driving completely through the campground, and to parking along the campground road and may hinder the turnaround loop, making it difficult for campers with RV/trailers to make the turnaround. Extra parking should be limited to what is planned at the Whey Pond parking area, and any day use fee (for using the trail) should be taken at the Rollins Pond main gate.

Permits

The usage statistics quoted to suggest that seasonal permits can be accommodated at Rollins are misleading. The usage rate is a function of the reservation system that is problematic. It is almost impossible to get a reservation for a preferred period without a lot of stress. Our experience is shared by all the Rollins campers we have talked to over the past few years. Even with your fingers on the keys ready to select "Reserve Now" at the instant that the reservation window opens, it is very unlikely you will be the person lucky enough to get the spot. Because it is so hard to reserve, many people book as much as they can, using multiple Reserve America accounts, then cancel what they will not use at the last minute. There must be many last minute cancellations because when you try to book, the campground seems full, yet when you are there, many prime sites stay empty for many days. You need to fix the reservation system first! The only way to discourage overbooking is to increase the cancellation fee to something meaningful. As a minimum, any cancellation should be charged the equivalent of 2 days (or the whole reservation cost if less), plus whatever Reserveamerica charges for administration fee. If you can find a way to make the reservation system more fair, your usage rate will go up. Seasonal permits that tie up the best prime sites would not be fair to the many other users.

Rehabilitate Roads

Upgrade of the roads is definitely necessary. However, the assumption that the roads can be upgraded and incorporate a bike lane without using more land than the existing road and its shoulder area is misleading. The road sections that could most benefit from a bike lane to make biking safer are also areas where you will need to take more land and potentially impact the off water sites. For example, the section of hill from site ~100 to ~110 would definitely benefit from a bike lane, but you will need to widen the road. I believe that the section on rehabilitation of roads needs more detail about what is proposed, and needs to be realistic about impacting the campground forest and some campsites.

I hope these comments are useful. I would be very happy to provide clarifications if there are questions.

Kind Regards
Mike Davies
614-919-5386

Sent from my iPad

From: [Denise Jenks](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Rollins Pond
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 11:03:32 AM

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I'm local to this campground and since covid, it's been hard to get any decent spot at Rollins Pond in particular. Allowing longer term camping than 14 days in peak season is just going to make things worse to the point where we can't ever get into that particular park. Please do not extend those limits. If you must do this, then extend the season into October. Ending it just after labor day just isn't right. Fish Creek is a totally different vibe and not in a good way. It isn't a substitute at all for Rollins Pond. Please reconsider!

Denise Jenks
Saranac Lake
[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [Charlie Frenette](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: Supporting a Direct Bicycle Connector between Rollins Pond Campsite and NYS Rail Trail
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 10:48:47 PM

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Greetings.

My name is Charlie Frenette. I own a home on 1223 State Route 30, Tupper Lake, NY. I am forwarding comments regarding the Rollins Pond UMP, with particular attention to the connector trail from Rollins Pond Campsite to the soon to finalized Rail Trail (C 7 corridor).

I would like to express my enthusiastic support for the Unit Management Plan (UMP) proposal for the Rollins Pond campsite. As an outdoor enthusiast and a dedicated advocate for New York State's recreational offerings, I commend your efforts in preserving our natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

I wish to highlight a potentially transformative element within the Rollins Pond UMP proposal – the establishment of a direct bicycle connector that links the Rollins Pond Campsite with the forthcoming NYS Rail Trail. This strategic linkage has the potential to offer multifaceted benefits that extend beyond individual recreation. By seamlessly connecting the campsite to the Rail Trail, we can foster a strong sense of community engagement, promote healthy lifestyles, and invigorate the local economy through increased tourism-related activities.

I envision this bicycle connector as a safe and convenient conduit for campers and visitors, enabling easy access to the Rail Trail while nurturing a shared appreciation for our natural landscapes. By enhancing the proposed hiking trail from Rollins Pond Campsite to the Rail Trail to accommodate bicycles, we can provide added value for campers, stimulate higher utilization of the Rail Trail, and generate economic vitality in nearby towns and hamlets.

The establishment of such a connector underscores the Department of Conservation's dedication to preserving our state's intrinsic beauty while facilitating responsible recreational pursuits.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse the UMP proposal for the Rollins Pond campsite and fervently support the inclusion of a direct bicycle connector to the NYS Rail Trail. I firmly believe that this initiative has the potential to trigger a cascade of positive effects – enriching camper experiences, fostering stronger community bonds, boosting local enterprises, and upholding the core values of conservation and recreation that define New York State.

Thank you for your consideration of this recommendation.

Sincerely,

Charlie

Charlie Frenette
Frenette.charlie@gmail.com
404 277 3691

From: [Mark Moeller](#)
To: [dec.sm.CampInfo](#)
Subject: UMP for Rollins Pond
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 8:40:15 PM

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As a member of the Town of Tupper Lake's Economic Development Committee, I wholeheartedly support the Unit Management Plan for Rollins Pond. Specifically we support the idea of a bike path that connects Fish Creek and Rollins Pond that allows for easy access to Tupper Lake by bicycle. The new trail between Tupper Lake and Saranac Lake along the former rail bed which will open in 2025 will be an economic boom for our area. Giving the thousands of campers at Fish Creek and Rollins Pond easy bicycling access to the Tri Lakes would be good news for the entire region.

Sincerely,
Mark and Susan Moeller
Tupper Lake

Sent from my iPhone