

Department of Environmental Conservation

CRANBERRY FOREST CONSERVATION EASEMENT

Interim Recreation Management Plan

Towns of Clifton & Colton St. Lawrence County



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I. Introduction

In 2021, the Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement was purchased by the People of the State of New York from The Conservation Fund. The conservation easement assures that the property will remain a privately-owned sustainable working forest, protect natural resources, continue private recreational leases, and allow for specific public recreation opportunities. The conservation easement deed is dated June 4, 2021 and is located at the St. Lawrence County Clerk's Office in Instrument # R-2021-00008430.

The Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement, referred to herein as "Conservation Easement", "Easement", or "Property", grants New York State a legal interest in the property and sets forth terms, restrictions and rights of both the Landowner and the State with respect to use and management of the tract. The State now owns the development rights on the property, and specific recreation rights. As with other conservation easements, by purchasing the development rights, the State effectively extinguished development rights on the property in "perpetuity". The Landowner is responsible for managing the property in a manner that complies with the conservation easement deed. This requires that they, for example, protect water quality, maintain and enhance biological diversity, provide for a broad distribution of forest age classes and provide standing dead trees, den and nest trees and large downed trees. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (Department, DEC or NYSDEC) is responsible for managing the rights purchased by the People of New York.

A. Purpose of the Interim Recreation Management Plan

This Interim Recreation Management Plan is intended to guide the initial designation of recreational facilities for public use on the Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement. It incorporates the rights, privileges and obligations provided for in the easement and is designed to align with provisions of the Grass River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan. Consultation with the fee title owner has occurred, and before this plan can be implemented it shall be reviewed and approved by The Conservation Fund. If deemed necessary, public recreational use could be further evaluated in a full Recreation Management Plan - appropriately expanded or revised.

Public recreation rights granted in the Conservation Easement but not included in this Interim Recreation Management Plan shall not be available for public enjoyment until an approved Recreation Management Plan.

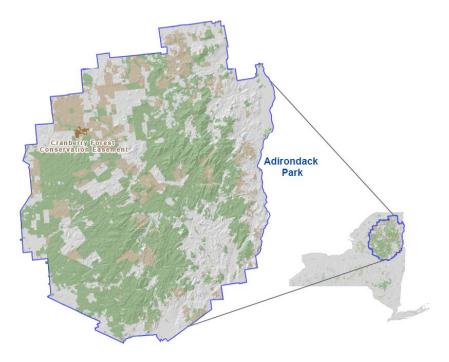
B. Planning for Climate Change

New York State is a national leader in its comprehensive approach to climate change. The NYSDEC recognizes that climate change is a serious threat to human and natural systems and is committed to ensuring sustainable natural resources for future generations by identifying climate change vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies that address those vulnerabilities. The Department is committed to making decisions based on the best available science, which includes resources like the ClimAID Report (updated in 2014), and the forest ecosystem vulnerability assessments for the Mid-Atlantic (southern New York) and New England and Northern New York, which include information on observed and future climate trends, and also summarize key vulnerabilities for forested natural communities. We also are committed to incorporating that vulnerability information into land management planning by using resources such as the Forest Adaptation Resources: Tools and Approaches for Land Managers document, which outlines an adaptation workbook process and menus of adaptation strategies. A future full Recreation Management Plan (RMP) for the Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement (CFCE) will provide the opportunity to incorporate climate change-based planning into the process in a meaningful way.

II. Setting

A. Property Description

The Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement comprises approximately 7,047 acres of land located within St. Lawrence County, in the Towns of Clifton and Colton. The Property is transected by a Forest Preserve Parcel, identified in the Conservation Easement as the Grass River Forest Preserve Corridor, but the Property is managed as a whole.



Map 1. Adirondack Park.

B. Location and Access (see Map, page 16)

The Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement (CFCE) is located in the northwestern Adirondack Park, with the western boundary adjacent to the Tooley Pond Road. The Property shares borders with Forest Preserve parcels, including the Grass River Wild Forest and the Cranberry Lake Wild Forest. The CFCE also shares borders with several other conservation easements: the Tooley Pond Conservation Easement; the Grass River Conservation Easement; and the Seveys Conservation Easement.

The Property is otherwise surrounded by privately owned land, and as such, management actions will be required to guide access and recreation on the easement while protecting the rights of the adjacent private landowners.

More details about these state lands can be found on the NYSDEC Public Website (<u>https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/75300.html</u>, <u>https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/34715.html</u>) and the NYS DECinfo Locator (<u>https://gisservices.dec.ny.gov/gis/dil/</u>).

C. Natural Resources

Terrain/Topography

This Easement is within the Tooley Pond, Brother Ponds, Cranberry Lake, and Newton Falls USGS quadrangles (see map on page 16). A detailed description of the ecoregions, geology, and soils on the Property can be found in the Grass River Wild Forest UMP, which can be found at <u>https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/75300.html#Planning</u>. The Property consists of rolling topography, with the highest point at over 1725' in the southern portion of the Easement. Riparian areas along Dead Creek represent the lowest elevation at under 1400'.

Water Resources

Dead Creek crosses the northeast side of the Property, joining with the South Branch Grass River on the adjacent Grass River Forest Preserve Corridor. Irish Brook, Twin Ponds Outlet, Cook Pond Outlet, and several unnamed streams also cross the Property. There are numerous ponds located throughout the Easement, including one named pond, 15-acre Dillon Pond, in the southwest portion of the Property.

There are several large wetlands identified on the Property by the National Wetlands Inventory and Adirondack Park Agency (APA). The attached hydrology map (page 17) depicts permanent wetlands as they currently exist on the Property.

Fish and Wildlife

The Easement is located in the southern portion of St. Lawrence County, within the foothills of the Northwestern Adirondack Mountains. A comprehensive list of fish and wildlife species of the region can be found in the Grass River Wild Forest UMP. A review of the NY Natural Heritage Program Database identified historical endangered Spruce Grouse habitat within the Property.

Vegetation

The lands within this Property are almost entirely forested, with species composition the result of past historical events, forest management, and differences in site factors; including soil type, soil moisture, and climatic conditions determined by elevation, slope, and aspect. A mixture of forest types can be found, including, in order of abundance:

Northern hardwoods, mixed woods, and softwoods of various size classes. The wetlands found on the Property provide their own vegetative classes. The NY Natural Heritage Program Database recognized historical zones for Northern firmoss (*Huperzia selago*) on the Property.

Invasive Species

As global trade and travel have increased, so has the introduction of non-native species. Many of these non-native species do not have adverse effects on the areas in which they are introduced, however, some become invasive in their new ranges, disrupting ecosystem function, and reducing biodiversity therefore degrading natural areas. Invasive species have been identified as one of the greatest threats to biodiversity, second only to habitat loss. Invasive species can damage native habitats by altering hydrology, fire frequency, soil fertility and other ecosystem processes.

The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) is a reliable source of information regarding invasive species, and one of the eight Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISMs). PRISMs are collaborations between the NYS DEC, resource managers, non-governmental organizations, industry, resource users, citizens and other state agencies and stakeholders to combat invasive species and provide invasive species habitat and occurrence data using iMapInvasives. The Cranberry Forest CE is located within the APIPP PRISM. While the nyimapinvasives.org internet portal does not list any invasive species on the Property, that does not mean that they do not exist. There are several invasive species identified nearby, generally on road corridors. Because roads and vehicles are the most common means to spread invasive species, actions must be taken to impart the importance of prevention to the public and to react quickly to new infestations. Best management practices (BMPs) for any improvements on the Property must be used.

Invasive Species	Scientific Name	Туре	Confirmed
Balsam Wooly Adelgid	Adelges piceae	Insect	Y
Common Reed	Phragmites australis	Terrestrial Plant	Y
Garlic Mustard	Alliaria petiolata	Terrestrial Plant	Y
Japanese Knotweed	Polygonum cuspidatum	Terrestrial Plant	Y
Pale Swallow-wort	Cynanchum rossicum	Terrestrial Plant	Y
Purple Loosestrife	Lythrum salicaria	Terrestrial Plant	Y
Variable Watermilfoil	Myriophyllum heterophyllum	Aquatic Plant	Y

Existing Invasive Species in the immediate vicinity

III. Public Use Administration and Management

A. Proposed Recreation Management Actions (see map page 19)

Motorized Use

The Grantor retains a Lessee Exclusive Use Period which is the first Wednesday after Labor Day through December 15 of every year. During this period, the public may only access the Property via the routes designated to access the Grass River Forest Preserve Corridor and the Dillon Pond Year-Round Public Use Area. From December 16 through the first Tuesday after Labor Day, the public may access the Property for recreational use.

Motor Vehicle Use

Conservation Easement Terms

Per Affirmative Rights, Section 4, of the Easement, public access by motor vehicle is limited to designated existing roads and trails and future roads and trails in accordance with easement terms and conditions. Per Affirmative Rights, Section 4.3, parking lots may be constructed, used, repaired, maintained, improved, or abandoned as necessary.

Discussion

The Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement allows for year-round public motor vehicle access of the Windfall Road and the Buckhorn Road from New York State Route 3 to the intersection of the Windfall Road (see Easement Appendix 1, Exhibit 1). The Buckhorn Road is located on a right of way through public and private land, from New York State Route 3 to the entrance of the easement. This plan proposes to expand existing use of these roads to members of the public during the periods specified above.

Management Actions

This plan proposes to open the Buckhorn Road to public motorized use, from New York State Route 3, to the intersection with the Windfall Road to the Forest Preserve boundary

north of the Grass River. This plan also proposes to open the Windfall Road to public motorized use, from the Tooley Pond Road to the boundary with Forest Preserve lands south of the Grass River. This route allows recreationists approximately five (5) miles of motorized access to the interior of the Property. Currently, this route is an unimproved gravel road used predominantly by high clearance and 4x4 motor vehicles. Roads open to the public may be closed during saturated soil conditions, rainy weather, and mud season.

Four parking areas will be designated in this plan to allow safe parking for public motor vehicles; one at an appropriate location 3 miles east on the Windfall Road, just south of the southern border of the Grass River Forest Preserve Corridor; one south of the intersection of the Windfall Road and Out-a-Fit Road; one at the intersection of the Hay Road and the Buckhorn Road; and a fourth adjacent to the Tooley Pond Road to facilitate access to Dillon Pond.

Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement signs will be placed in accordance with NYSDEC standards along routes open to the public and the Property's boundary.

Gates and/or signage may be installed, on some roads, to prevent public motor vehicleuse. These roads will be assessed for potential public motor vehicle use after an RMP is developed.

A future RMP will formalize parking areas, propose informational kiosks, and consider installation of additional gates/checkpoints to manage use.

Snowmobile Use

Conservation Easement Terms

Per Affirmative Rights, Section 4.2.d, snowmobiles may use only the roads and trails delineated on (See Easement Appendix 1, Exhibit 1) and future roads and trails in accordance with easement terms and conditions.

Discussion

There are currently 13-miles of state funded and unfunded club snowmobile trails open on the Property. These trails are maintained through a Volunteer Stewardship Agreement (VSA) with local snowmobile clubs.

Management Actions

This plan proposes to formally open 13-miles of existing snowmobile trails on the property to public use, with the provision that existing trails onto adjacent properties may be closed at the behest of the landowner. In such cases, where trail connections are broken, reasonable attempts will be made to find alternative routes using existing roads and trails when possible. Where sections of snowmobile trails are broken and no alternative trails can be used, a new section of trial will need to be constructed.

ATV Use

Conservation Easement Terms

Per Affirmative Rights, Section 4.2.d, ATVs may use only the roads and trails delineated on (See Easement Appendix 1, Exhibit 1) and future roads and trails in accordance with easement terms and conditions.

Discussion

There are currently no public ATV trails on this Property.

Management Actions

This plan does not propose to open any trails to public ATV use.

Non-Motorized Use

During the Lessee Exclusive Use Period, the public shall not access the property except for the Dillon Pond Year-Round Public Use Area and for the purpose of accessing Forest Preserve lands via Windfall Road and Buckhorn Road. From December 16 through the first Tuesday after Labor Day, the public may access the Property for recreational use.

Hiking/Biking/Snowshoeing/Cross-County Skiing

Conservation Easement Terms

Per Affirmative Rights, Section 4.2.c, the public is allowed access to and over the property by non-motorized use.

Discussion

The easement terms for this Property allow for public recreational activities such as hiking, walking, running, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing; fishing, hunting, and

trapping (during legal seasons outside the Lessee Exclusive Use Period); dog-sledding, bicycling, mountain biking, horseback riding, and by Mechanized Aid, as defined in the Conservation Easement, for persons with mobility impairment.

Management Actions

This plan proposes to formally open the Property to the above mentioned non-motorized recreational activities and access. In addition, the public will have access to approximately twenty-one (21) miles of established roads for non-motorized recreation, including the motorized-accessible portion of the Buckhorn and Windfall Roads.

Paddling

Conservation Easement Terms

Per Affirmative Rights, Section 4.2.b.2, the Dillon Pond Year-Round Public Use Area is open to the public any time of the year.

Discussion

Dillon Pond, located off the Tooley Pond Road, is an easily reachable body of water suitable for non-motorized recreation.

Management Actions

This plan formally opens the Dillon Pond Year-Round Public Use Area for public recreational access, including but not limited to paddling, fishing, nature observation, etc. Improve hand launch at Dillon Pond to accessible standards.

Fishing/Hunting/Trapping

Conservation Easement Terms

Per Affirmative Rights, Section 4.2.c, fishing, hunting, and trapping by the public is permitted during legal seasons outside of the Lessee Exclusive Use Period.

Discussion

Fishing, hunting, and trapping have historically occurred on this Property. The public are now allowed to participate in these historic uses outside of the Lessee Exclusive Use Period, excluding Dillon Pond, which is open to the public year-round.

Management Actions

This plan proposes formally opening the property to public fishing, hunting, and trapping outside of the Lessee Exclusive Use Period, to be facilitated by motorized access on the Buckhorn and Windfall Roads and non-motorized access on all other roads and trails.

Other Recreation Activities

Conservation Easement Terms

Per Affirmative Rights, Section 4.2.c, access to and over the property by horseback and dogsled is permitted on established roads and trails.

Discussion

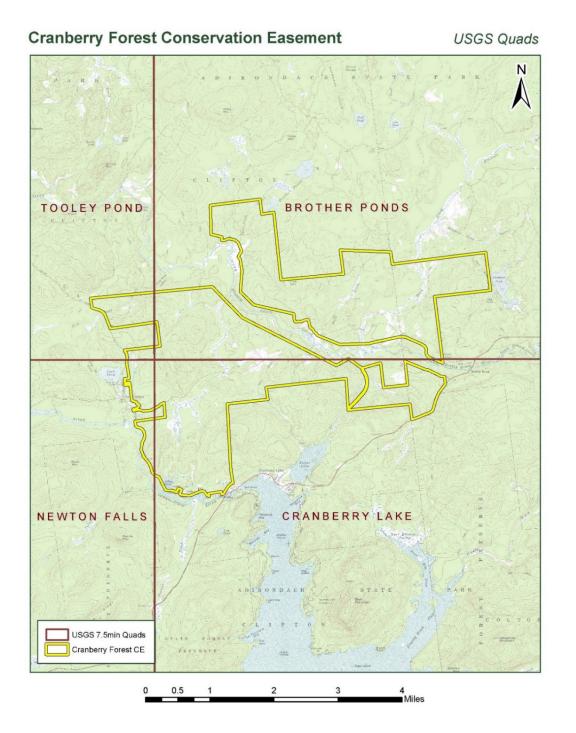
The easement terms for this Property allow for public recreational activities such as hiking, walking, running, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing; fishing, hunting, and trapping (during legal seasons outside the Lessee Exclusive Use Period); dog-sledding, bicycling, mountain biking, horseback riding, and by Mechanized Aid, as defined in the Conservation Easement, for persons with mobility impairment.

Management Actions

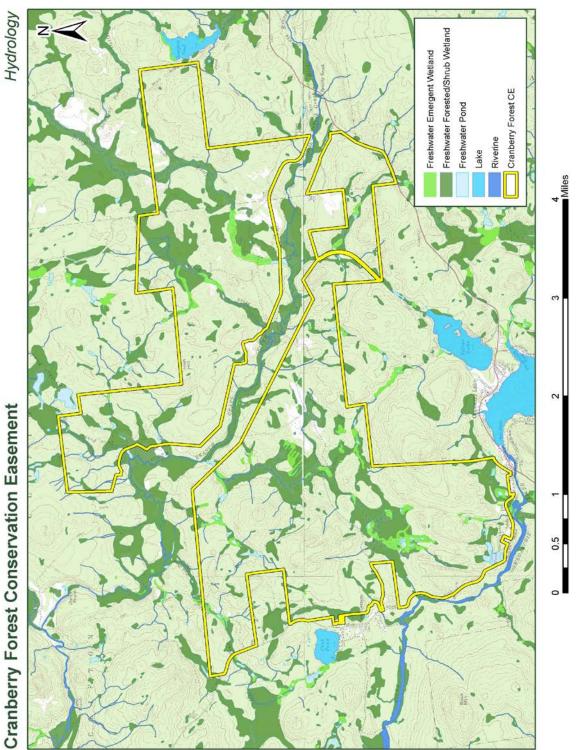
This plan proposes to formally open all existing roads on the Property to public horseback riding and dogsledding.

- **IV. Appendices**
 - A. Maps
 - B. Implementation Schedule and Estimated Budget
 - C. SEQRA
 - D. Application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - E. DEC and Landowner Review Declaration

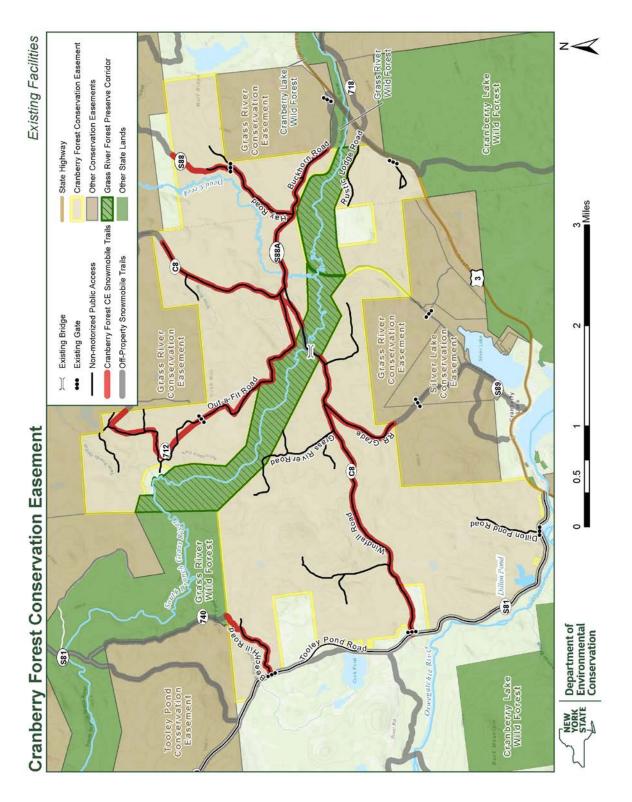
USGS Quad Map



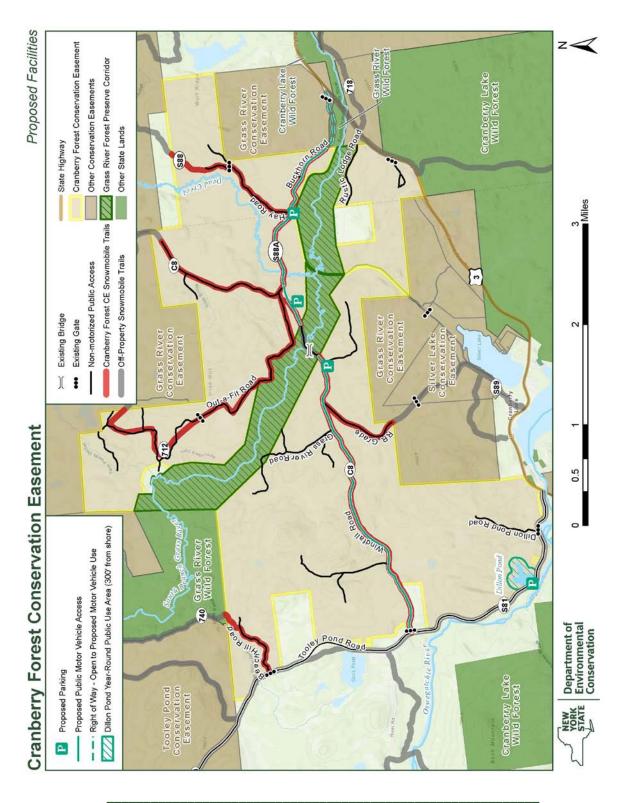
Hydrology



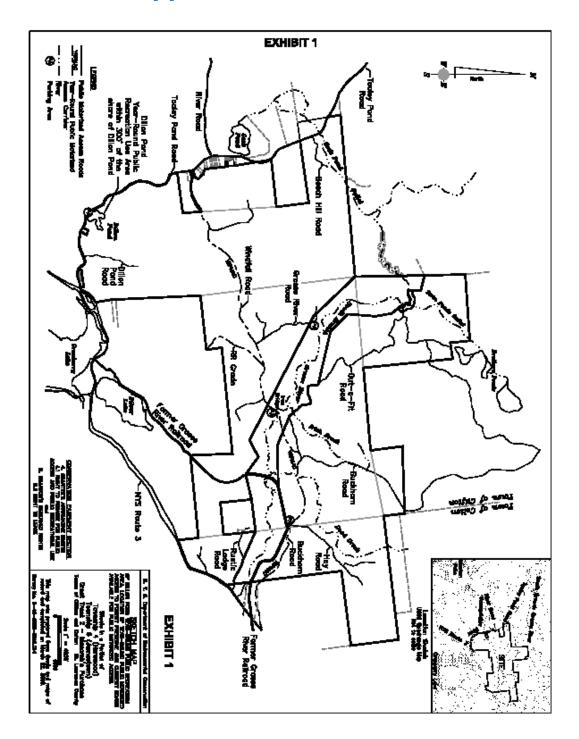
Existing Facilities



Proposed Facilities



Easement - Appendix 1, Exhibit 1



B. Implementation Schedule and Estimated Budget

The improvement and maintenance of the proposed roads, routes, and facilities on the protected property will combine the efforts and resources of the NYSDEC, landowner, and volunteer groups such as the Cranberry Lake Mountaineers Snowmobile Club. All the proposed management activities will involve input from the landowner.

The following tables outline a schedule for implementation of the proposed management actions. Planner may elect to include project cost estimates based on previous Department projects and which may include service contracting and/or staff days.

Annual			
	Project	Est. Cost or Staff Days	
1	Maintain roads, trails, and signage	\$15,000	
	Total Annual Cost	\$15,000	

Ph	Phase One			
	Project	Est. Cost or Staff Days		
1	Post CE boundary signs	\$5,000		
1	Establish informal parking areas	\$10,000		
2	Improve hand launch at Dillon Pond to accessible standards	\$5,000		
3	Construction of snowmobile sections as needed	\$5,000		
	Total Phase Cost	\$25,000		

C. SEQRA

The State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) requires the consideration of environmental factors early in the planning stages of any proposed action(s) that are undertaken, funded or approved by a local, regional or state agency. A Full Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) has been prepared and was used to identify and analyze relevant areas of environmental concern based upon the management actions in this proposed management plan.

Project : Cranberry Forest CE IRMP Date : 6/25/2021

Full Environmental Assessment Form Part 3 - Evaluation of the Magnitude and Importance of Project Impacts and Determination of Significance

Part 3 provides the reasons in support of the determination of significance. The lead agency must complete Part 3 for every question in Part 2 where the impact has been identified as potentially moderate to large or where there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action will not, or may, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.

Based on the analysis in Part 3, the lead agency must decide whether to require an environmental impact statement to further assess the proposed action or whether available information is sufficient for the lead agency to conclude that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact. By completing the certification on the next page, the lead agency can complete its determination of significance.

Reasons Supporting This Determination:

To complete this section:

- Identify the impact based on the Part 2 responses and describe its magnitude. Magnitude considers factors such as severity, size or extent of an impact.
- Assess the importance of the impact. Importance relates to the geographic scope, duration, probability of the impact occurring, number of people affected by the impact and any additional environmental consequences if the impact were to occur.
- The assessment should take into consideration any design element or project changes.
- Repeat this process for each Part 2 question where the impact has been identified as potentially moderate to large or where there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action will not, or may, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.
- Provide the reason(s) why the impact may, or will not, result in a significant adverse environmental impact
- For Conditional Negative Declarations identify the specific condition(s) imposed that will modify the proposed action so that no significant adverse environmental impacts will result.
- Attach additional sheets, as needed.

The Interim Recreation Management Plan seeks only to formalize existing uses and propose facility upgrades to be completed within the framework of a future RMP. Where sections of snowmobile trails are broken and no alternative trails can be used, a new section of trail may need to be constructed.

Question #1

Impact on Land

h. Other impacts: The potential of constructing new snowmobile segment(s) will follow the following Best Management Practices: Locate trails away from streams, wetlands and unstable slopes wherever possible; use of proper drainage devices, such as water bars and broad-based dips; locate trail segments to minimize grade; avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands and wherever water collects; remove vegetation at the root level not the ground level; and avoid placement of trails through core segments of deer yards.

Question #3

Impacts on Surface Water

h. Other impacts: Potential re-routes and construction of new snowmobile segment(s) will avoid classified wetlands as well as any "wet spots". To minimize the potential for erosion, water bars, turnpiking and/or bog-bridging may be used to protect the surface of the trail and ensure adequate drainage.

Question #7

Impact on Plants and Animals

Potential construction of new snowmobile segment(s) might require a small number of trees to be cut as well as brush removed. Large trees will be avoided whenever possible. Given the small scale of this work, tree removal is not expected to result in any significant adverse impact on the site(s) or adjacent areas. The construction of new segment(s) of trail will avoid areas with endangered species and species of special concern.

Management actions proposed in the Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement Interim Recreation Management Plan will not result in any significant adverse environmental impact. They are minor in nature and of short duration. All projects will follow Best Management Practices as set forth in this Full EAF/Negative Declaration minimizing the potential for any impacts.

Determination of Significance - Type 1 and Unlisted Actions					
SEQR Status:	Type 1	Unlisted			
Identify portions of EAF	F completed for this Proj	ect: 🔽 Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	

Upon review of the information recorded on this EAF, as noted, plus this additional support information

and considering both the magnitude and importance of each identified potential impact, it is the conclusion of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation as lead agency that:

A. This project will result in no significant adverse impacts on the environment, and, therefore, an environmental impact statement need not be prepared. Accordingly, this negative declaration is issued.

B. Although this project could have a significant adverse impact on the environment, that impact will be avoided or substantially mitigated because of the following conditions which will be required by the lead agency:

There will, therefore, be no significant adverse impacts from the project as conditioned, and, therefore, this conditioned negative declaration is issued. A conditioned negative declaration may be used only for UNLISTED actions (see 6 NYCRR 617.7(d)).

C. This Project may result in one or more significant adverse impacts on the environment, and an environmental impact statement must be prepared to further assess the impact(s) and possible mitigation and to explore alternatives to avoid or reduce those impacts. Accordingly, this positive declaration is issued.

Name of Action: Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement Interim Recreation Management Plan

Name of Lead Agency: NYS DEC

Name of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency: Kramer Kwaczala

Title of Responsible Officer: Forester 1

Signature of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency: Kramer Kwaczała

Signature of Preparer (if different from Responsible Officer) Kramer Kwaczala for Peter D'Luhosch Date: August 30, 2021

Date:

August 30, 2021

For Further Information:

Contact Person: Peter D'Luhosch

Address: 190 Outer Main Street, Suite 103, Potsdam, NY 13676

Telephone Number: 315-265-3090

E-mail: peter.dluhosch@dec.ny.gov

For Type 1 Actions and Conditioned Negative Declarations, a copy of this Notice is sent to:

Chief Executive Officer of the political subdivision in which the action will be principally located (e.g., Town / City / Village of) Other involved agencies (if any) Applicant (if any)

Environmental Notice Bulletin: http://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/enb.html

D. Application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), along with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title V, Section 504, has a profound effect on the manner by which people with disabilities are afforded equality in their recreational pursuits. The ADA is a comprehensive law prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in employment practices, use of public transportation, use of telecommunication facilities, and use of public accommodations.

Consistent with ADA requirements, DEC incorporates accessibility for people with disabilities into siting, planning, construction, and alteration of recreational facilities and assets supporting them. In addition, Title II of the ADA requires, in part, that services, programs, and activities of DEC, when viewed in their entirety, are readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. DEC is not required to take any action which would result in a fundamental alteration to the nature of the service, program, or activity, or would present an undue financial or administrative burden. When accommodating access to a program, DEC is not necessarily required to make each existing facility and asset accessible, as long as the program is accessible by other means or at a different facility.

This plan incorporates an inventory of all the recreational facilities and assets on the unit or area, and an assessment of the programs, services, and facilities provided to determine the level of accessibility. In conducting this assessment, DEC employs guidelines which ensure that programs are accessible, including buildings, facilities, and vehicles, in terms of architecture and design, and the transportation of and communication with individuals with disabilities.

In accordance with the US Department of Justice's ADA Title II regulations, all new DEC facilities, or parts of facilities, that are constructed for public use are to be accessible to people with disabilities. Full compliance is not required where DEC can demonstrate that it is structurally impracticable to meet the requirements [28 CRF § 35.151 (a)]. Compliance is still required for parts of the facility that can be made accessible to the extent that it is not structurally impracticable, and for people with various types of disabilities. In addition, all alterations to facilities, or part of facilities, that affect or could affect the usability of the facility will be made in a manner that the altered portion of the facility is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities [28 CRF § 35.151 (b:1-4)].

DEC uses the Department of Justice's 2010 Standards for Accessible Design in designing, constructing, and altering buildings and sites. For outdoor recreational facilities not covered under the current ADA standards, DEC uses the standards

provided under the ABA to lend credibility to the assessment results and to offer protection to the natural resource (ABA Standards for Outdoor Developed Areas; Sections F201.4, F216.3, F244 to F248, and 1011 to 1019).

Any new facilities, assets, and accessibility improvements to existing facilities, or assets proposed in this plan, are identified in the section containing proposed management actions. A record of accessibility determination is kept with the work planning record. For further information, please contact Leah Akins, DEC Statewide ADA Accessibility Coordinator, at accessibility@dec.ny.gov

E. DEC and Landowner Review Declaration

The New York Department of Environmental Conservation has the responsibility of managing public access and recreation on the Cranberry Forest Conservation Easement, in accordance with the encumbering conservation easement. This Interim Recreation Management Plan is consistent with the purpose, terms and conditions of the conservation easement. IRMP management actions are approved for implementing public recreation on the easement property. Notwithstanding the foregoing, should any discrepancies arise between the IRMP and the Conservation Easement, the Conservation Easement will prevail.

ACCEPTED BY The Conservation Fund

By: _____ R. A.f. Thomas R. Duffus

Vice President

Date 9/16/2021

ACCEPTED BY NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Date 9/24/21

Robert K. Davies, Director Division of Lands & Forests