



Division of Lands & Forests

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# **Cranberry Lake Wild Forest**

## Unit Management Plan Amendment

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St. Lawrence County

July 2014

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Joseph J. Martens, Commissioner

Lead Agency: (in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency)  
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
625 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12233

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ANDREW M. CUOMO  
GOVERNOR



JOE MARTENS  
COMMISSIONER

STATE OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12233-1010

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Record  
**SUBJECT:** Cranberry Lake Wild Forest  
**DATE:** JUL 22 2014

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The Amendment to the Cranberry Lake Wild Forest Unit Management Plan has been completed and the Adirondack Park Agency found it to be in conformance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

The UMP Amendment is consistent with the State Constitution, Environmental Conservation Law, and Department Rules, Regulations and Policies and is hereby approved and adopted.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph J. Martens

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**RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY  
THE ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY  
WITH RESPECT TO CRANBERRY LAKE WILD FOREST  
UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT 2**

**JUNE 13, 2014**

**WHEREAS**, Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act directs the Department of Environmental Conservation to develop, in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency, individual management plans for units of land classified in the Master Plan for Management of State Lands and requires such management plans to conform to the general guidelines and criteria of the Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to such guidelines and criteria, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (Master Plan) prescribes the contents of unit management plans and provides that the Adirondack Park Agency will determine whether a proposed individual unit management plan conforms with such general guidelines and criteria; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Environmental Conservation has prepared a unit management plan amendment for the Cranberry Lake Wild Forest in the Town of Clifton and Fine, St. Lawrence County, and includes proposed management actions for the Cranberry Lake Wild Forest dated May, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department has filed a SEQR Negative Declaration and published a notice in the Environmental Notice Bulletin on May 28, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Environmental Conservation is the lead agency, and the Adirondack Park Agency is an involved agency whose staff have been consulted in the preparation of the proposed plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Agency is requested to determine whether the final Cranberry Lake Wild Forest Unit Management Plan Amendment 2, (the Plan) dated May, 2014, conforms with the standards and guidelines of the Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Adirondack Park Agency has reviewed the proposed Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Plan recognizes the need to improve public use and enjoyment of the area, avoid user conflicts and prevent overuse of the area according to the guidelines and criteria of the Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Plan's objectives include providing reasonable public access where appropriate in order to provide visitors with recreational opportunities while minimizing resource impacts; and

**WHEREAS**, the Plan proposes the formal adoption of the Cranberry 50 East and Cranberry 50 West connector trails, removing 4.14 miles of the Cranberry 50 Route off of State Route 3; and

**WHEREAS**, the Plan proposes the development of a designated camping site along the Cranberry 50 West Connector Trail;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that pursuant to Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act, the Adirondack Park Agency finds the Cranberry Lake Wild Forest Unit Management Plan Amendment 2, dated May, 2014, conforms with the general guidelines and criteria of the Master Plan.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the Adirondack Park Agency authorizes its Executive Director to advise the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation of the Agency's determination in this matter.

AYES: Chairwoman Lani Ulrich, Richard Booth, Karen Feldman, Arthur Lussi, William Thomas, William Valentino, Dan Wilt, Brad Austin (DED), Deidre Scozzafava (DOS), Robert Stegemann (DEC)

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Sherman Craig

ABSENT: None

## UMP AMENDMENT 2

### INTRODUCTION

The Cranberry Lake Wild Forest (CLWF) is located in the Towns of Fine, Clifton and Colton, St. Lawrence County. The unit contains approximately 65,919 acres. A unit management plan was completed in 1984. Since the adoption of the CLWF UMP an amendment for Bicycle Trail designation across all Wild Forest units, including CLWF, was completed and approved (1988). This amendment proposes the creation of two foot trails, the Cranberry Lake 50 West and the Cranberry Lake 50 East connector trails. When fully implemented, these connector trails will enable hikers and skiers to avoid 4.14 miles of the Cranberry Lake 50 Trail's current route along NYS Route 3, making for a more pleasant and safer experience, while still utilizing 1.56 miles along Route 3 to access the amenities within the hamlet of Cranberry Lake.

The proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Western Connector Trail will connect the first loop of the Peavine Swamp ski trail to the Columbian Road via NY State Forest Preserve and conservation easement lands currently owned by Molpus Woodlands Group, LLC. This proposed trail can be built without significant tree cutting, but will require a bridge on Forest Preserve land to be built for a stream crossing.

Once the public reaches Columbian Road, they can continue hiking the Town River Walk, crossing the outlet of Cranberry Lake on an existing footbridge, then continue along Riverside Drive to NYS Route 3. Once on NYS Route 3, hikers will continue through town for 1.56 miles until they reach the Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Connector Trail.

The proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Connector Trail will connect the DEC parking area east of Cranberry Lake, via a short segment of the Gilbert Tract ski trail, to the existing Connector Trail. The Connector Trail connects the Cranberry Lake State Campground to the Burnt Bridge Pond Trail. The Burnt Bridge Pond Trail is part of the Cranberry Lake 50 Trail. The proposed trail will follow an abandoned logging road and will not require any tree cutting.

## IV. PROJECTED USE AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSED

### **A. FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Foot Trail Development**

The Cranberry 50 Route is an approximately 50 mile hiking loop around Cranberry Lake that was proposed in the Five Ponds Wilderness Area UMP (1995). This route, using several trails in the Five Ponds Wilderness and Cranberry Lake Wild Forest, also includes some mileage on NYS Route 3 east and west of the hamlet of Cranberry Lake.

Following some investigation into options, two new Class IV foot trails will be developed which will allow hikers to avoid 4.14 miles of travel along NYS Route 3.

The proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Western Connector Trail will extend from the first loop of the Peavine Swamp ski trail east to a predetermined location for a stream crossing. This crossing will require a bridge to be constructed. Approximately three trees will be cut for the bridge construction. The exact location of this trail on both sides of this bridge will be determined by the Department. One potential route has been identified. An additional designated campsite has also been identified on the Peavine Swamp ski trail.

Once this trail reaches the NY State property line, it will continue east on lands currently owned by Molpus Woodlands Group, LLC, subject to a conservation easement held by NY State. The proposed route on easement lands follows a main haul road used in timber harvesting operations. This route will minimize tree cutting.

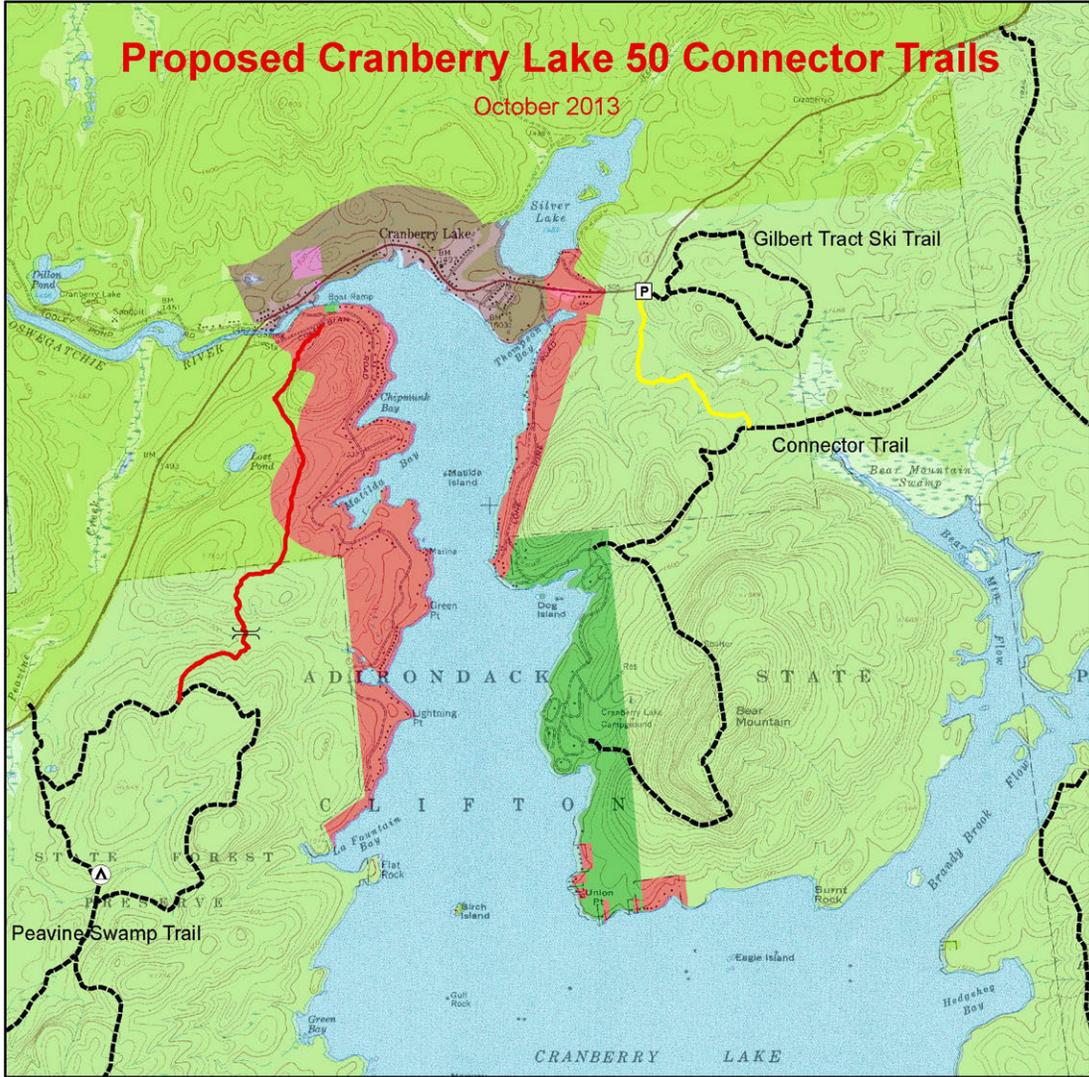
The Cranberry Lake 50 Western Connector Trail will end on Columbian Road in the Town of Cranberry Lake. At this point hikers can continue hiking on the Town River Walk, crossing the outlet of Cranberry Lake on an existing footbridge, and continue along Riverside Drive to NYS Route 3. Once on NYS Route 3, hikers will continue through town for 1.56 miles until they reach the Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Connector Trail. The Cranberry Lake 50 Western Connector Trail removes 2.24 miles of the Cranberry Lake 50 trail from NYS Route 3.

The proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Connector Trail will extend from the Gilbert Tract ski trail parking area to the existing Connector Trail. A new kiosk for both the Gilbert Tract Ski Trail and the Cranberry Lake 50 Trail will be constructed at the Gilbert Tract parking lot. The Connector Trail connects the Cranberry Lake State Campground to the Burnt Bridge Pond Trail, the latter which is part of the Cranberry Lake 50 Trail. The proposed trail will follow an abandoned logging road, will not require any tree cutting, and will be approximately 5,000 feet long. Consultation with APA staff has determined that siting the trail to follow an abandoned logging trail will be preferred, with minor re-routes around wetlands if they are encountered. The Cranberry Lake 50 Eastern Trail will remove 1.90 miles of the Cranberry Lake 50 trail from NYS Route 3.

The Department will work with the Agency to determine if there is a need for a wetlands permit; any new structures, such as bog bridging, associated with a wetland permit are authorized by the amendment.

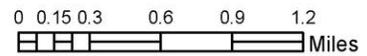
# Proposed Cranberry Lake 50 Connector Trails

October 2013



## Legend

- |                           |                                 |                      |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| ----- Existing DEC Trails | <b>APA Land Classifications</b> | Primitive            |
| — CL50 Connector West     | <b>Land Classification</b>      | Wild Forest          |
| — CL50 Connector East     | Hamlet                          | Intensive Use        |
| ⌘ Proposed Foot Bridge    | Moderate Intensity              | State Administrative |
| ⊙ Proposed Campsite       | Resource Management             | Water                |



Map and GPS data for connector trails by J. Savage, SUNY-ESF Ranger School



Typical character of proposed Cranberry 50 East Connector Trail.



Wet section of proposed Cranberry 50 East Connector Trail.



Junction with the Connector Trail and the proposed Cranberry 50 East Connector Trail.



Peavine Swamp Ski Trail – Loop #1



Proposed Foot Bridge Crossing Site – CL 50 Western Connector Trail

# **Appendix 1 – Response to Public Comments**

The Department held a public comment period on the Draft UMP amendment from April 9 to April 25, 2014. During that time, one e-mail comment was received. A summary of that comment is below, followed by DEC's response.

***Comment:***

State Boat Launch facilities along Route 3 will see increased use as hikers seek parking near the re-routed trail. This increased use will bring with it an increase in problems such as trash, human waste, etc.

***Response:***

The parking lots at these Boat Launch sites are rarely full, and will likely see only a slight increase in use as a result of this trail re-route. These sites are already monitored by Department staff, including Forest Rangers, and any increase in inappropriate use will be dealt with as it arises.