

# **Long Pond Easement**

## **Recreation Plan**

**October 2005**

**Towns of  
Clare and Colton  
St Lawrence County**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Planning Area Overview**

The DEC entered into an easement agreement with the owners of the Long Pond Tract in January 1999. Through the conservation easement, 18,950 acres are made available to the public for various recreational pursuits while allowing forest management to continue.

There are three main objectives of the easement: to perpetuate and sustain the working forest under long-term, professional management; to provide for a diversity of forest types and natural conditions necessary to conserve and perpetuate fish and wildlife habitat; and to provide for a wide range of recreational opportunities that are consistent with forest management and resource conservation purposes to complement activities available on adjacent or near-by Forest Preserve land.

The primary intent of this recreation plan is to delineate the recreational opportunities that are available to the public along with making proposals to manage and enhance those opportunities.

### **B. Area Geographic Information**

The Long Pond Forest is in the towns of Colton and Clare. The property is described as a portion of Township 7, Great Tract 2 and all of Lot 15, Township 6, Great Tract 3 of Macomb's purchase. It is situated in the northwest foothills of the Adirondacks.

### **C. History**

The Long Pond Tract has been a working forest for many years. There are six hunting clubs that lease hunting and fishing privileges from the landowner. Over the years club members have erected 42 cabins and many associated storage sheds. All buildings have been inspected and their foot prints noted. Each of the camps has an exclusive use envelope surrounding it, where the lessees can be authorized by the landowner to post against public use. Private leases continue to the year 2013, and clubs retain certain exclusive rights. After that year only six pre-determined buildings will remain. These camps and the envelope around them are shown on the attached maps.

### **D. Access**

Access to the tract is over the main east - west haul road from State Highway 56. The tract has an extensive network of logging roads and trails for motor vehicles, snowmobiles, and ATVs. Non-motorized activities such as camping, mountain biking, hiking, nordic skiing, snowshoeing, and horseback riding are allowed.

## II. INVENTORY OF RESOURCES

### A. Natural Resources

#### 1. Physical

##### a. Terrain

Information on topography can be found on the Albert Marsh, Stark, Tooley Pond and Brother Pond quadrangle maps. Elevation ranges from about 1075 feet at Albert Marsh to 1865 feet at the peak of Baldface Mountain. The major feature of the tract is Long Pond, the body of water it is named for. Other notable water bodies are Ormsby Pond and the North Branch of the Grass River.

##### b. Geology and Soil

The tract is in the Fall Zone Monocline, adjacent to the north west edge of the Childwold Rock Terrace. The underling bedrock is predominantly resistant rocks such as granite. The softer sedimentary rock that once overlaid the bedrock has been eroded away.

The soils of this tract are the Potsdam, Adams, Naumberg, and Dawson series. They were formed in glacial outwash. Their differences are basically a result of where they were deposited. Slope, drainage and ground water regimes influence soil development.

##### c. Water

Waters in this tract are all in the Grass River watershed. There are a number of streams on the tract. The named streams are Gulf Brook, Mud Brook, Webb Creek, Deerskin Creek, Blue Mountain Stream and the North Branch of the Grass River. Other waterbodies are Long Pond, Ormsby Pond, Blue Pond and their outlet streams. Ponds are monitored to assess impacts of acid rain. None require lime to change chemistry, at this time, but some have relatively low pH values that may need to be addressed in the future. Long Pond was recently treated with lime.

##### d. Wetlands

The northwest corner of the Long Pond tract includes about 100 acres of Albert Marsh. There are numerous smaller wetlands. The wetland area is approximately 1350 acres, less than 10% of the total.

#### 2. Biological

##### a. Wildlife

Animals found in the Long Pond tract are typical Adirondack foothill wildlife. Large animals found are white-tailed deer, black bear and occasionally moose. The furbearing species include beaver, coyote,

martin, fisher, otter, and bobcat. No habitat for rare, threatened or endangered species is identified on the tract.

The Breeding Bird Atlas identified 96 confirmed, probable and possible breeding bird species in the blocks covering the tract. The Herp Atlas identified 24 species of reptiles and amphibians on or adjacent to the tract.

#### b. Vegetation

A review of the Natural Heritage maps in the Potsdam office did not identify any sites on the tract.

The predominant, broad, naturally occurring vegetative types include northern hardwood, mixed woods and spruce/fir. Like most of the surrounding area, this forest was logged off in the late 1800s.

#### c. Fisheries

Fisheries data for the tract is not complete. The river, streams and ponds support a good population of Adirondack strain brook trout, and will be managed to perpetuate trout. Blue Pond is routinely stocked with brook trout and therefore probably has the greatest use. Long Pond has been treated with lime and is proposed to be stocked. Comprehensive fisheries management procedures can not be developed until more data is gathered.

### 3. Visual/Scenic Resources

The highest point and the tract's most impressive view is from the top of Baldface Mountain. The low, relatively flat portions of the forest provide a different landscape, appreciated for other aspects of natural beauty. The three ponds are not difficult to access and can furnish a canoeing experience in a wild setting.

#### B. Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers

The North Branch of the Grass River is designated as "Scenic" by the Wild, Scenic and Recreational River Act. Development and use along the river must conform with laws and rules associated with the designation.

#### C. Cultural

A review of the NYS Archaeological site index map did not identify any sites on the tract.

#### D. Economic Impact

Keeping the Long Pond tract as a working forest is considered a major benefit of the conservation easement. Making the forest available to the public for recreation is nearly as important. Tourism and outdoor recreation are growing increasingly more influential in the Adirondack community economies.

### **III. PAST MANAGEMENT AND USE**

The tract has been used primarily as a working forest to provide wood products and support forest based recreation such as hunting and fishing. Presently six clubs lease the tract. Other popular activities are hiking, snowmobiling, trapping and wildlife observation.

The tract contains snowmobile trails that are being maintained under an Adopt-A-Natural Resource Agreement with the St Lawrence County Snowmobile Association.

Managing public use on this tract is complicated by the reserved rights that are granted to leasees. Most of these reserved rights will expire on December 15, 2013.

### **IV. LONG POND EASEMENT MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND CONSTRAINTS**

The management of the tract must conform to a number of constitutional, legislative, and policy constraints including those related to the conditions of acquiring the lands from Long Pond LLC.

#### **Easement Management Constraints and Guidelines**

The conservation easement specifies public access and recreational opportunities in the following way.

Access by non-motorized means is allowed including by bicycle, horses or similiar animals, foot, snowshoe, cross country skis, canoes/boats and horseback.

Access by motor vehicle is limited to the following roads.

1. The main east-west haul road from SH 56 to Selleck's Lower Camp.
2. The secondary haul road from USGS benchmark 1304 south across Deerskin Creek than east and then north back to the main east-west haul road.
3. The secondary haul road going north from Selleck's Lower Camp across Gulf Brook, then north east, then east, than back south to the main haul road.
4. The secondary haul road that branches off to the north from the road described above going about 1 mile.
5. The secondary haul road near the easterly property boundary going back about 2 miles north and west.
6. The secondary haul road that branches off to the main haul road just west of USGS benchmark 1289 going south and southeast to the north end of Long Pond.

DEC, with fee title owner approval, can build new motor vehicle roads and parking areas necessary for the exercise of recreational rights.

Snowmobiles and ATV's may use all existing roads. Some roads may be closed by the landowner to be plowed for logging, but alternative routes must be provided.

DEC is responsible for placing signs to indicate which trails are open for public snowmobile and ATV use.

DEC, with fee title owner approval, can build new roads and trails for ATV's, snowmobiles and foot travel by the public.

Camping by the public is permitted under the same regulations as other state lands.

Firewood may be gathered from dead and downed trees for on site cooking and warmth only.

Hunting, fishing and trapping by the public is permitted, except for the period of Sept. 1- Dec. 15 each year through 2013.

From Oct 1 - Dec 15 each year through 2013 there is no public use at all.

DEC has the right to manage fish and wildlife.

## **V. PUBLIC USE POTENTIAL**

The easement states the DEC will provide public recreation opportunities in a manner that is consistent with it's forest management and resource conservation objectives. All public use management activities must consider the reserved rights of the land owner, it's leasees, and the public as defined in the easement. Public use will be managed in a manner consistent with general public use of state land.

### **A. Access**

Access to the parcel is from State Highway 56 over the main haul road. Access through the parcel for motor vehicles is over roads as described above. Snowmobiles and ATVs can only use roads and trails that are posted as open.

### **B. Universal Access**

The case of Galusha vs. the State of New York, settled by consent decree on July 5, 2001, requires DEC to take actions to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. One of these actions is to upgrade 30 miles of roads and 10 miles of trails to be open for ATV use, though not exclusively for people with disabilities. In addition, DEC is supposed to consider and identify accessibility opportunities whenever it is proposing to develop facilities for public use. This plan will identify some accessible facilities.

### **C. Recreation**

This easement includes the full range of public recreational opportunities for wild land type recreational activities, including significant opportunities for access by motor vehicles, ATV's and snowmobiles.

Use of ATVs on roads and trails must comply with the conditions and requirements identified in the sections of the Vehicle and Traffic law that pertain to ATV use (see Appendix I). This includes limiting public ATV use on roads open to other motor vehicles to only those sections that provide links between ATV trail networks that could not otherwise be connected. In addition, it requires all routes open to ATV use to be posted as such.

Some of the existing roads and trails are currently being used for snowmobiling, including sections that are part of the trails groomed by the St. Lawrence County Snowmobile Association and are part of the statewide snowmobile trail system.

Public hunting rights were acquired but are subject to limitations during the first 15 years of the easement. Hunting by the public is not allowed through 2013 during the period of September 1 to December 15.

The North Branch of the Grass River can be reached relatively easily for fishing, and there is limited opportunities in the small lakes and ponds on the property.

The easement also provides ample opportunity for hiking, biking, skiing, snowshoeing and nature observation.

## **VI. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

### **1. Goals**

The easement was designed to create a condition where the landowner can continue to carry on responsible forest management, can continue to own the land and where the state can provide a new place for the public to enjoy outdoor recreation. This cooperative arrangement is beneficial to both the public and the private land owner. Goals appropriate to this situation are as follows:

- Protect and enhance the natural character of this tract while providing a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Manage the tract cooperatively with landowner to optimize timber management and recreational opportunities.

### **2. Objectives**

#### **Administration**

- Maintain boundary lines to clearly identify ownership and discourage illegal use.
- Adequately protect the tract from wild land fire.
- Maintain and construct facilities (trails, parking areas, etc.) in response to need and in

conformance with DEC regulations, policies and the conservation easement.

#### Wildlife Management

- Maintain native wildlife species at levels compatible with their natural environment.
- Maintain hunting, trapping, and other wildlife related recreational activities.
- Provide opportunities for enjoyment and beneficial utilization of the wildlife resource.

#### Fisheries Management

- Perpetuate fish as part of the Adirondack environment. Protection of existing native populations a priority.
- Manage fish so that their numbers and occurrences are compatible with their habitat and the public interest.
- Maintain resource inventories for all waters.
- Provide opportunities for enjoyment and beneficial utilization of the fish resource.
- Continue to maintain sportfish populations (e.g. brook trout) by annual stocking in suitable waters. Monitor stocking success and recommend changes based on results from periodic surveys.
- Maintain satisfactory pH of ponds as indicated for optimum fishery development, consistent with Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources liming policy.
- Characterize anglers and assess magnitude of annual effort through periodic angler survey.

#### Public Use Management

- Provide for a variety of recreational opportunities compatible with the easement agreement.
- Initiate an educational effort to keep the public informed of the values, limitations, and opportunities available on this tract.
- Make public use of this forest safe, enjoyable, and non destructive to the forest ecosystem.

#### Water Quality Management

- Maintain the natural condition of water courses, including streams, ponds, and lakes, water purity free of contaminants is of utmost importance.
- Reduce the impact of facility use and development on water quality by minimizing sedimentation caused by erosion.



## **VII. MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

The following sections present an issue, concern, or need that has been identified relative to managing this tract, and a proposed management strategy to deal with it.

### **A. Public Use and Information**

DEC has a responsibility to the general public and adjoining private landowners to make state boundaries readily identifiable. Well marked boundary lines and facilities enable the public to utilize the tract without trespassing on private lands.

- ▶ Adequately mark, post and maintain boundaries
- ▶ Mark intersections of roads with road names

There is a need to inform and educate the public and lessees regarding use of the tract.

- ▶ Post primary roads and trails (where appropriate) as open to motor vehicles, snowmobiles or ATVs. This includes the main haul road, secondary logging roads and trails.
- ▶ Information regarding the use of the tract will be described in a brochure which is currently being developed.
- ▶ An information kiosk will be constructed at the entrance to the tract.

### **B. Administration**

Forest Rangers have search and rescue responsibilities for this tract as prescribed by law and need access, as do Operations and L&F staff for property management.

- ▶ Existing gates should be upgraded to DEC specifications and need to have state locks installed.

### **C. Fisheries**

Data to base management decisions on is lacking at this time.

- ▶ Survey and inventory all water bodies starting with the North Branch of the Grass River(NBGR). Field efforts will include: descriptions of physical characteristics, water chemistry evaluations and biological inventory.
- ▶ Monitor angler effort aimed at the tract's fishery resource especially the NBGR.

## **VIII. PROPOSED MANAGEMENT**

### **A. Facilities Development**

#### **1. Access**

##### **a. Roads**

Rehabilitate roads/trails as necessary for motorized use and post where appropriate for use by

CP-3 permit holders, snowmobilers and ATVs.

All roads to accessible campsites will be posted open to CP-3 permit holders.

Roads to be posted open to ATV's are as shown on the attached map.

All roads shown on the attached map will be posted open to snowmobiles. Primary snowmobile routes shown on this map will be groomed, though the location of these routes may be changed with the agreement of DEC if the landowner will be plowing the route for winter logging.

The Long Pond Road along with a portion of the Main Haul and the Gulf Brook Club Roads, will be posted open to motor vehicles.

b. Parking Areas

Construct 3 parking areas.

Long Pond - 4 car (2 accessible spaces)

Entrance - 10car (6 accessible spaces)

Stone Dam - 4 car (2 accessible spaces)

2. Sanitation

a. Pit Privy

Accessible privies will be installed at each parking area and campsite.

3. Camping

Construct 5 accessible campsites (Albert Marsh, Stone Dam, Long Pond, GulfBrook, and Ormsbee Landing), 2 of which will be group sites.

4. Hiking

Locate (with fee title owner) and designate a hiking trail to the peak of Baldface Mountain.

5. Canoeing

Construct a canoe access site at Long Pond.

6. Information

Place an accessible kiosk at the main entrance parking lot to provide information on the tract.

**Schedule for Implementation**

2005	Paint and post boundary	15,000
	Construct foot trail	7,000
	Construct 5 accessible campsites	25,000
	Install 5 gates	5,000
	Construct 3 parking areas	30,000
	Install 8 accessible privies	10,000
	Construct accessible kiosk	3,000
	Road/trail rehabilitation	<u>200,000</u>
		\$295,000



**Bibliography**

Buddington, A.F. Regional Geology of the St. Lawrence Magnetite District, Northwest Adirondacks, New York. U.S. Geology Survey Prof. Paper 376, 1962

Jamieson, Paul and Donald Morris. Adirondack Canoe Waters: North Flow. The Adirondack Mountain Club. Glens Falls, New York, 1991

Gordon, W. H. 1992. Adirondack brook trout pond angler use survey 1992. NYSDEC Administrative Report, Watertown, 24pp.

Pfeiffer, M.H. 1979. A comprehensive plan for fish resource management within the Adirondack zone. NYSDEC Administrative Report, Ray Brook, 207pp.

## Appendix I

### § 2405. Designation of highways and public lands for travel by ATVs.

1. Highways. Except with respect to interstate highways or controlled access highways, the department of transportation with respect to state highways, maintained by the state and any other governmental agency with respect to highways, including bridge and culvert crossings, under its jurisdiction may designate and post any such public highway or portion thereof as open for travel by ATVs when in the determination of the governmental agency concerned, it is otherwise impossible for ATVs to gain access to areas or trails adjacent to the highway. Such designations by a state agency shall be by rule or regulation, and such designations by any municipality other than a state agency shall be by local law or ordinance.

2. Public lands other than highways. A governmental agency other than a municipality, by regulation or order, and a municipality, by ordinance or local law, may designate any appropriate public lands, waters and properties other than highways under its jurisdiction as a place open for travel by ATVs upon written request for such designation by any person, and may impose restrictions and conditions for the regulation and safe operation of ATVs on such public property, such as travel on designated trails and hours of operation. In addition thereto, such agency or municipality may not require the operator of an ATV to possess a motor vehicle operator's license. A municipality may charge a fee for use of ATVs on such public lands.

3. Signs and markers. (a) Such designated highways or portions thereof or designated lands shall be identified by markers in such manner as may be provided by rules and regulations of the commissioner.

(b) All signs or markers shall be erected at the expense of the state or municipality, provided, however, that the municipality may accept funds or contributions therefor from private persons, clubs or associations interested in the promotion of ATVs.

4. Any regulation, order, local law or ordinance which designates a highway or portion thereof or designated lands which may be used for ATV operations may include rules and impose restrictions and conditions for the regulation and safe operation of ATVs on the highways and lands so designated, such as travel on designated trails and hours of operation. Any restriction or condition not contained in this chapter must be posted.

5. Copies of orders, regulations, local laws or ordinances adopted by governmental agencies pursuant to this section shall be filed with the commissioner.

# CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, hereby agree this Long Pond Easement Recreation Plan meets the requirements of the Conservation Easement (document 1999-2868, St Lawrence County) and meets with our approval.

We also agree, should changes become necessary, that both parties must agree to those changes before they are implemented.

Danzer Forestland Inc

By: Gene Desposito, For D.F.L.

Date: April 19, 2006

New York State  
Department of Environmental Conservation

By: David J. Smith  
David Smith, Regional Forester

Date: May 5, 2006