

Appendix B:

Partner and Stakeholder Outreach and Participation

Early on in the planning process (March – April 2019), the DEC planning team polled stakeholders’ views on a wide range of topics. Among overall takeaways, the team learned that invasives were identified as the biggest threat to forests, with runners-up being fragmentation, deer, and climate change. Survey participants recognized natural benefits—habitat, clean water, etc.—as the most important benefits from forests.

These responses informed the strategies of the Forest Action Plan. As this Plan was being developed, DEC repeatedly collected feedback from a variety of interested entities.

1. March 21 – 22, 2019: PowerPoint presentation at the State Fish and Wildlife Management Board bi-annual meeting, Syracuse, New York: (https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/wildlife_pdf/fwmbpresentmar19newp2.pdf).

Note: The Fish and Wildlife Management Board (FWMB) is not to be confused with New York State’s wildlife agency, which is NYSDEC’s Fish and Wildlife Division. The State FWMB is comprised of three elected voting representatives from each regional FWMB, along with advisory members from DEC and a multitude of other organizations (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/about/564.html>).

2. March – April 2019: Online survey

- March 28 (Thursday) – April 15 (Monday), 2019 – Division of Lands and Forests statewide staff;
- April 1 – 24, 2019 – Stakeholders.

Stakeholder list included:

- Federal land management agencies, such as
 - U.S. Forest Service, including Finger Lakes National Forest,
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife, including Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex, and Walkkill River National Wildlife Refuge; as well as
 - NPS, including Fire Island National Seashore and Appalachian Trail monitoring.
- Military installations, such as Fort Drum and West Point,
- Other federal agencies, such as USDA NIFA,
- NYSDEC Division of Fish and Wildlife, which is New York’s state wildlife agency,
- NRCS NY (New York State’s Technical Committee),
- Other state agencies, such as OPRHP and New York State Ag and Markets,
- Broad spectrum of additional relevant organizations and entities.

Survey results. A wide range of stakeholders and the entire DEC Lands and Forests staff had the opportunity to complete a survey, sharing their priorities for New York’s forests. The participation rate was high, as was the extent and quality of the thoughtful comments. Stakeholders shared their views on a wide range of topics, from the threat of invasives; the need for better tax laws; better enforcement; challenges of Preserve management; reintroduction of the American chestnut; deer; education efforts; etc. Among the overall takeaways, the planning team concluded that stakeholders:

- Consider the biggest threat to forests to be invasives! Runner-ups: fragmentation, deer, and climate change,
- Find the most important benefits from forests to be natural benefits – habitat, clean water, etc.
- Most find the Forest Action Plan somewhat relevant,
- Are familiar with most forest protection efforts,
- Most find regulations sufficient,
- See taxation and lack of knowledge as the biggest challenges to private forestland owners,
- In their opinion, every forest protection tool is important; there is no single ‘magic wand,’
- In their perception, state agencies and nonprofits have the highest land conservation ethic, while urban and suburban residents have the lowest.

3. May 23, 2019: Presentation at EPA, DEC, and Indian Nations meeting
Embassy Suites at Destiny USA, Syracuse, New York
4. June 24, 2019: Stewardship Committee meeting
NYSDEC headquarters, 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233
 - Stewardship Committee members included:
 - Federal land management agencies, such as NPS, U.S.F.S., and U.S. Fish and Wildlife;
 - Military installations, such as Fort Drum;
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service, New York;
 - NYSDEC Division of Fish and Wildlife, which is New York’s state wildlife agency;
 - Other state agencies, such as New York State Dept. Of Agriculture and Markets.
5. June 25, 2019: Meeting with SUNY ESF, Center for Native Peoples and the Environment
SUNY ESF, Syracuse, New York 13210
6. July 18, 2019: Meeting with TNC NY
The Albany Pine Bush, 195 New Karner Rd 1, Albany, New York 12205
7. July 19, 2019: Meeting with SUNY ESF, Center for Native Peoples and the Environment
SUNY ESF, Syracuse, New York 13210
8. August 20, 2019: Meeting with Hudson River Estuary Program
NYSDEC headquarters, 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233

9. September 19, 2019: Stewardship Committee meeting

NYSDEC headquarters, 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233
10. October 2019: Assistant Director for the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Environment Division joins the Stewardship Committee.
11. December 11, 2019: Meeting with Assistant Director for the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Environment Division.
12. February 5 – April 3, 2020: Public comment period for Draft SFAP.
13. February 26, 2020: Public Meeting. Via WebEx and at NYSDEC headquarters, 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233

