



New York State  
Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Lands & Forests

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# Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest Westport Boat Launch and Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site

## Unit Management Plan

Towns of Essex and Westport, Essex County, New York

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May 2005

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Governor

Denise M. Sheehan  
Acting Commissioner

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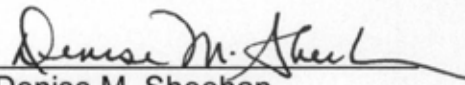
## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Record

DATE: APR 29 2005

SUBJECT: Split Rock Wild Forest Unit Management Plan (Final UMP)

The Final UMP/FEIS for Split Rock Wild Forest has been completed. The Final UMP/FEIS is consistent with the guidelines and criteria of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, the State Constitution, Environmental Conservation Law, and Department rules, regulations and policies. The Final UMP includes management objectives and a five year budget and is hereby approved and adopted.

  
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And to the many residents of the Towns of Essex and Westport and countless other individuals.

## Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	<u>2</u>
A. Legal Requirements	<u>2</u>
B. Background	<u>3</u>
C. Plan Purpose	<u>3</u>
D. Area Overview	<u>4</u>
1. Location and Description	<u>4</u>
2. Boundary	<u>4</u>
3. Size and Ownership	<u>4</u>
4. Unique Attributes	<u>5</u>
E. General Management Situation	<u>7</u>
II. WILD FOREST MANAGEMENT GOALS	<u>8</u>
III. BIOPHYSICAL RESOURCES	<u>9</u>
A. Geology	<u>9</u>
B. Soils	<u>10</u>
C. Climate	<u>11</u>
D. Air Quality	<u>11</u>
E. Water and Wetlands	<u>14</u>
F. Plants, Animals and Fish	<u>14</u>
1. Forest/Aquatic/Terrestrial Vegetation	<u>14</u>
2. Wildlife	<u>18</u>
3. Fish	<u>21</u>
IV. SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	<u>22</u>
A. Cultural Resources and History	<u>22</u>
B. Economic Values	<u>23</u>
C. Public Use	<u>24</u>
D. Man-Made Facilities	<u>25</u>
E. Capacity of Resource to Withstand Use	<u>28</u>
F. Working Landscapes - Agricultural Reservations	<u>33</u>
G. Adjacent Land Uses	<u>33</u>
V. SUPPORTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, AND STUDIES	<u>34</u>
VI. ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	<u>37</u>
A. Naturalness	<u>37</u>
B. Cultural Resources	<u>37</u>
C. Education, Information, and Interpretation	<u>38</u>
D. Recreation Development	<u>38</u>
E. Protection of Native Flora and Fauna	<u>38</u>
F. Public Information and Education	<u>39</u>
VII. MANAGEMENT AND POLICY	<u>40</u>

## Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
A. Past Management . . . . .	<u>40</u>
1. Guiding Documents . . . . .	<u>40</u>
2. Application of Guidelines and Standards . . . . .	<u>42</u>
B. Administration and Management Principles . . . . .	<u>45</u>
1. Administration . . . . .	<u>45</u>
2. Wild Forest Management Principles . . . . .	<u>45</u>
VIII. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS . . . . .	<u>48</u>
A. Bio-Physical Resources . . . . .	<u>48</u>
1. Soils . . . . .	<u>48</u>
2. Water Resources . . . . .	<u>49</u>
3. Vegetation . . . . .	<u>50</u>
4. Fisheries . . . . .	<u>54</u>
5. Wildlife . . . . .	<u>54</u>
B. Land Protection . . . . .	<u>56</u>
1. Administration . . . . .	<u>56</u>
C. Cultural Resources . . . . .	<u>57</u>
D. Man- Made Facilities . . . . .	<u>58</u>
1. Trails . . . . .	<u>58</u>
2. Trailheads/Parking Facilities . . . . .	<u>60</u>
3. Primitive Tent Sites . . . . .	<u>61</u>
E. Public Use and Access . . . . .	<u>62</u>
1. Public Use . . . . .	<u>62</u>
2. Access for Persons with Disabilities . . . . .	<u>62</u>
F. Information and Education . . . . .	<u>63</u>
IX. SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND BUDGET . . . . .	<u>65</u>
YEAR ONE . . . . .	<u>65</u>
YEAR TWO . . . . .	<u>66</u>
YEAR THREE . . . . .	<u>66</u>
YEAR FOUR . . . . .	<u>67</u>
YEAR FIVE . . . . .	<u>67</u>
X. PLAN REVIEW AND EVALUATION . . . . .	<u>68</u>
XI. STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT . . . . .	<u>68</u>
ACRONYMS . . . . .	<u>69</u>
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES . . . . .	<u>70</u>
APPENDICES . . . . .	<u>72</u>
APPENDIX ONE	
DEC Response to Public Comments . . . . .	<u>73</u>

APPENDIX TWO	
Breeding Bird Atlas . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>77</u></a>
APPENDIX THREE	
Peregrine Advisory . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>81</u></a>
APPENDIX FOUR	
Mammals of the Unit . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>82</u></a>
APPENDIX FIVE	
Deer, Bear, Furbearer Harvest Data . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>84</u></a>
APPENDIX SIX	
Amphibians and Reptiles Inventory . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>86</u></a>
APPENDIX SEVEN	
Proposed Parking Lot Construction Details . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>88</u></a>
APPENDIX EIGHT	
Rare Communities and Species . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>89</u></a>
APPENDIX NINE	
TRAIL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM - Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>90</u></a>
APPENDIX TEN	
MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL STANDARDS AND GENERAL GUIDELINES . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>93</u></a>
APPENDIX ELEVEN	
Designated Campsite Monitoring Form . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>94</u></a>
APPENDIX TWELVE	
SEQR-Negative Declaration . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>104</u></a>
APPENDIX THIRTEEN	
State Environmental Quality Review	
FULL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>109</u></a>
APPENDIX FOURTEEN- Regulated Wetlands Map . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>122</u></a>
APPENDIX FIFTEEN- Historic Deer Yard Map . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>123</u></a>
APPENDIX SIXTEEN- Maps . . . . .	<a href="#"><u>124</u></a>

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Legal Requirements**

The Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest (SRMWF) Unit Management Plan has been developed pursuant to, and is consistent with, relevant provisions of the New York State Constitution, the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), the Executive Law, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, Department of Environmental Conservation ("Department") rules and regulations, Department policies and procedures and the State Environmental Quality and Review Act.

Most of the State land which is the subject of this Unit Management Plan (UMP) is Forest Preserve lands protected by Article XIV, Section 1 of the New York State Constitution. This Constitutional provision, which became effective on January 1, 1895 provides in relevant part:

*"The lands of the state, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the Forest Preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, or shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed."*

ECL §3-0301(1)(d) and §9-0105(1) provide the Department with jurisdiction to manage Forest Preserve lands, including the SRMWF.

The Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP) was initially adopted in 1972 by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), with advice from and in consultation with the Department, pursuant to Executive Law §807, now recodified as Executive Law §816. The APSLMP provides the overall general framework for the development and management of State lands in the Adirondack Park, including those State lands which are the subject of this UMP.

The APSLMP places State land within the Adirondack Park into the following classifications: Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe, Wild Forest, Intensive Use, Historic, State Administrative, Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers, and Travel Corridors, and sets forth management guidelines for the lands falling within each major classification. The APSLMP classifies the lands which are the subject of this UMP as part of the SRMWF.

The APSLMP sets forth guidelines for such matters as: structures and improvements; ranger stations; the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment and aircraft; roads, jeep trails and state truck trails; flora and fauna; recreation use and overuse; boundary structures and improvements and boundary markings.

Executive Law §816 requires the Department to develop, in consultation with the APA, individual UMPs for each unit of land under the Department's jurisdiction which is classified in one of the nine classifications set forth in the APSLMP. The UMP's must conform to the guidelines and criteria set forth in the APSLMP. Thus, UMP's implement and apply the APSLMP's general guidelines for particular areas of land within the Adirondack Park.

Executive Law §816(1) provides in part that "(u)ntil amended, the master plan for management of state lands and the individual management plans shall guide the development and management of state

lands in the Adirondack Park.” Thus, the APSLMP and the UMP’s have the force of law in guiding Department actions.

It is important to understand that the State Land Master Plan has structured the responsibilities of the Department and the Agency in the management of State lands within the Adirondack Park. Specifically, the APSLMP states that:

"..... the legislature has established a two-tiered structure regarding state lands in the Adirondack Park. The Agency is responsible for long range planning and the establishment of basic policy for state lands in the Park, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Conservation. Via the master plan, the Agency has the authority to establish general guidelines and criteria for the management of state lands, subject, of course, to the approval of the Governor. On the other hand, the Department of Environmental Conservation and other state agencies with respect to the more modest acreage of land under their jurisdictions, have responsibility for the administration and management of these lands in compliance with the guidelines and criteria laid down by the master plan."

In order to put the implementation of the guidelines and criteria set forth in the APSLMP into actual practice, the DEC and APA have jointly signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the implementation of the State Land Master Plan for the Adirondack Park. The document defines the roles and responsibilities of the two agencies, outlines procedures for coordination and communication, defines a process for the revision of the APSLMP, as well as outlines procedures for State land classification, the review of UMPs, state land project management, and state land activity compliance. The MOU also outlines a process for the interpretation of the APSLMP.

## **B. Background**

The SRMWF is named for Split Rock Mountain, the supreme feature of the landscape and refers to an unusual “split rock” formation and historic landmark found on private land at the northern end of the mountain where it meets Whallon’s Bay on Lake Champlain. The planning area consists of five geographically-linked units within a ten mile radius of each other; Split Rock Mountain, including the Lake Champlain Palisades, Webb Royce Swamp, the Heurich Conservation Easement, the Westport Boat Launch Site, and the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site.

This area was created as a separate Wild Forest Unit in compliance with APSLMP guidelines in 1999. The APSLMP, on page 32, defines “a Wild Forest as an area where the resources permit a somewhat higher degree of human use than in Wilderness, Primitive, or Canoe areas, while retaining an essentially wild character. A Wild Forest is further defined as an area that frequently lacks the sense of remoteness of wilderness, primitive, or canoe areas and that permits a wide variety of outdoor recreation.”

## **C. Plan Purpose**

The primary purpose of this unit management plan is to establish a public partnership between DEC, local governments, interested groups and citizens to cooperatively develop and share strategies for the use, conservation, enhancement, and enjoyment of these public lands in compliance with the APSLMP. Comprehensive planning allows for the exchange of ideas and information before management actions, that can have long-term effects, are taken. This is necessary to afford consistent



management direction by establishing clearly stated goals and objectives and the means necessary to implement them. One of the most important aspects of the planning process is to introduce and involve the public in the care and stewardship of state lands. This element increases the Department's awareness of, and responsiveness to, the values and opinion expressed by the citizens of New York which leads to better management decisions.

Major contributors to this planning effort include the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and Land Trust, the Bouquet River Association, the Eddy Foundation, Essex County Planning Office, the Essex County Visitors' Bureau, Lake Champlain Walkways, and the Towns of Essex and Westport.

This plan is designed to guide the management of this area for a five year period commencing at the time of approval by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation. Plan monitoring is essential to determine whether or not plan goals and objectives are being met. If a management action is clearly ineffective and a change is needed, alternatives will be analyzed and a new action(s) proposed and implemented following APSLMP guidelines that includes public review.

## **D. Area Overview**

### **1. Location and Description**

The SRMWF is located in the eastern foothills of the Adirondack Mountains along the western shore of Lake Champlain. The tract is located in the Towns of Essex and Westport in Essex County. Extensive public road and lake frontage provides excellent inland access. The core area, Split Rock Mountain, is located between the Lake Shore Road (County Route #9) to the west and Lake Champlain to the east. The Heurich Conservation Easement is found immediately north of the mountain facing Whallon Bay. The third appendage, Webb Royce Swamp lies to the west between Lake Shore Road and the Clark Road. Nearby communities include the Village of Essex, 6.0 miles to the north, and the Village of Westport, 4.3 miles south.

The Westport Boat Launch Site is located on Lake Champlain at the north end of the Village of Westport on State Highway (SH) 22 and occupies three acres.

The Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site is located in the Hamlet of Whallonsburg adjacent to County Route (CR) 22 on the Bouquet River (See Appendix Sixteen for separate Whallonsburg location map). The property is triangular in shape with a total area of 0.3 acres.

### **2. Boundary**

The SRMWF boundaries (See location map in Appendix Sixteen) parallel roads or follow property lines. All exterior boundary lines have been surveyed in the past 10 years and the appropriate maps filed in the Essex County Clerk's Office. Road frontage and boundary lines were posted along the entire boundary in 2001 to better identify public land.

### **3. Size and Ownership**

The planning area encompasses more than 3,860 acres, by geographical area. Size and ownership of the SRMWF is as follows:

**Table 1. Unit Summary by Area**

State Forest Preserve Lands:	
Split Rock Mountain	3,078 acres
Webb Royce Swamp	305 acres
Westport Boat Launching Site	3.0 acres
Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site	0.3 acres
Heurich Conservation Easement	474 acres
<b>Total Area:</b>	<b>3,860.3 acres</b>

The Open Space Institute (OSI) retained agricultural rights (deeded rights) on eight parcels of recently acquired state land (forest preserve) within the unit totaling 197 acres. Recent forest preserve purchases include Goldsmith, 1.0 acre (1998) and Davis, 111 acres (1999). The latter are located southwest of Split Rock Mountain and afford frontage on Lake Shore Road in the Town of Westport.

In addition, New York State purchased a conservation easement (development rights) to substantially protect the outstanding scenic and historical character and aesthetic beauty of Split Rock Farm as well as to provide a buffer to adjoining state lands. Public access and recreation rights were not acquired. In this case, ownership is divided between the State of New York and Gary F. Heurich, the grantor, with each party holding certain rights to the property. Taxes are apportioned to the percentage of the property retained or acquired by each owner. New York State acquired 83% interest in the land, but not buildings.

#### **4. Unique Attributes**

Nearly 4.3 miles long, north to south, the SRMWF contains the largest block of undeveloped and forested shoreline on the New York side of Lake Champlain. The steep, rugged terrain, dense forests, notable wetland communities, and adjoining private farm lands blend together to create a unique and diverse setting.

The high relief features of Split Rock Mountain (elevation 902 feet) dominate the landscape. The eastern side of the mountain next to Lake Champlain is extremely rugged with steep slopes, precipitous cliffs, and numerous rock outcrops. The lake shore is steep and densely wooded with deep bays. There are several pockets of elevated wetlands scattered along the mountain in narrow ravines and in small flat areas. The west side of the mountain is more moderate and less rugged. Viewed from the south, the mountain has a “sawtooth” appearance. The unbroken forested components represent the largest single wildlife corridor in the Towns of Essex and Westport for wildlife traveling between the Adirondack foothills and Lake Champlain. The swath of Wild Forest anchored by Split Rock Mountain extends in a large U-shape from the lake to the larger mountains westward. The forested corridor extends to private land encompassing Coon Mountain and the Bouquet Mountains.

The high topographic relief of the Palisades on Lake Champlain, and indeed the great bathymetric depth and northeasterly offset of the lake at this location is due to the type of bedrock in the area and the structural geologic history. The Palisades, and for that matter most of Split Rock Mountain, are underlain by anorthosite or anorthositic gneiss. These are rocks that are quite resistant to weathering. Commonly, these rocks are the bedrock in the topographically highest areas of the Adirondacks. These rocks extend to the lakeshore and comprise the high cliffs seen there. This type of rock, and related interlayered gabbro, occur northeastward to Split Rock Point.

The eastern Adirondacks are riven by many northeasterly-trending faults. These faults are vertical or steeply dipping. The time of original motion is unknown and it is likely that these faults have been active more than once. One such fault occurs on the west side of Split Rock Mountain. Here, the east side of the fault has gone up relative to the west side. It is very likely that another such fault occurs under the lake just east of Split Rock Mountain. Although the fault zone doesn't appear on land, the northeast trend of the lakeshore is closely parallel to the other faults in the area. In this case, the east side of the fault would have gone down relative to the west side, leaving Split Rock Mountain as a highland between the two faults.

Indeed, the general shape of Lake Champlain suggests this. From the southern end of the lake northward to Westport, the lake is generally oriented north-south. North of Split Rock Point, the lake is similarly oriented. Between Westport and Split Rock Point, the lake trends to the northeast and the axis is offset in that direction. It is here that the lake is very likely fault-controlled and this fault zone and subsequent erosion give rise to the Palisades.

Webb Royce Swamp, lying west of the mountain, is a regionally significant wetland. It contains unusual plant species and communities such as a deciduous forested swamp. The site is one of the few known areas in the Adirondack Park supporting swamp white oak, a species more associated with southern climates. Beavers raised the water level, killed many trees and increased the open water space in the wetland. Presently, the beavers have left the area and the water level is down. The open water area is banded by a wet meadow complex that is important to general bird life and migratory waterfowl. The land adjoining Webb Royce Swamp consists primarily of agricultural land supporting corn and hay fields and hedge rows of deciduous trees and shrubs.

The conditions noted above account for a great diversity of plant and animal species. All the tree species in New York State north of the Mohawk River, with the exception of sycamore, are found on this site. Eighty percent of the bird species of the Adirondack Park, including the black-crowned night heron and the peregrine falcon, have been documented in this vicinity. Split Rock Mountain is believed to contain the northern-most breeding population of the endangered timber rattlesnake on the East Coast (Adirondack Nature Conservancy, 1997).

Aside from its natural features, the SRMWF has a variety of cultural and historical resources worthy of protection and preservation. There is evidence of Native American occupation before European settlement. The landscape attests to past home sites and industrial ventures with several cellar holes, charcoal kilns, iron mines, and a rock quarry. Some of these sites have an attached folklore that is rich in legend, tradition, and superstition.

The SRMWF lies in an area described as the Champlain Valley Reserve conceived and defined by the Adirondack Council in its 2020 Vision Series Reports. The reports set forth a vision for the

Adirondack Park of the year 2020 and beyond. Volume One of the series, *Biological Diversity: Saving All The Pieces*, gives special mention of Split Rock Mountain and Webb Royce Swamp not only for biological diversity, but also for their historic and pastoral landscapes. The report likewise identified adjacent Coon Mountain and the neighboring North and South Bouquet Mountains as significantly important natural areas. The latter are private nature preserves.

The Westport Boat Launch is significant because it provides the only public boating access to the core area of Lake Champlain. The nearest other public boat launch facilities are located at Willsboro Point (16 miles north) and Port Henry (13 miles south).

## **E. General Management Situation**

The SRMWF began as a 200 acre parcel at the southern end of Split Rock Mountain. This consisted of a landlocked parcel in Lot 20 of the Rod Lewis Patent which afforded no legal public access from public highways or adjoining private lands. The parcel was acquired by tax sale in 1898 and added to the forest preserve as a detached parcel, remote from other State lands. Boundary lines were surveyed and maintained, but no active management occurred.

In March of 1981, the State purchased 1,245 acres south and west of the State lands in Lot 20. This purchase was made possible by funds provided by the 1972 Environmental Quality Bond Act. Known as the “Smerjian Purchase”( Essex #271.4), this acquisition afforded 1,100 feet of public road frontage and 2.4 miles of undeveloped shoreline on Lake Champlain. It included such places as Barn Rock Bay, the Lake Champlain Palisades, a small portion of the defunct Adirondack Granite Co. Quarry, and Snake Den Harbor. All are reached by an informal network of old logging roads, now closed to motor vehicles, and unmarked footpaths extending inland from Lake Shore Road.

A five vehicle parking lot was built on Lake Shore Road in 1992 in cooperation with the Town of Westport. The parking lot was constructed to provide safe off-road parking for ice fishermen and hikers and a former old road was designated as a snowmobile trail to Lewis Clearing Bay and Snake Den Harbor. These projects were approved under the APA/DEC Memorandum of Understanding provision regarding projects not considered ordinary or routine maintenance in areas not addressed by a specific unit management plan.

In 1994, 1,823 acres were purchased from the Open Space Institute which included the northern portion of Split Rock Mountain and Webb Royce Swamp. The lands had been owned by Gary Heurich of Essex, New York. The Open Space Institute retained agricultural rights on 197 acres of farm fields adjacent to Webb Royce Swamp. The Adirondack Nature Conservancy administers these lands for the Open Space Institute. As of 2001, only 73 acres (37%) of the total agricultural reservation are being actively managed for agriculture, the remaining 124 acres have reverted to forest. Also in 1994, a conservation easement of 474 acres, known as Split Rock Farm, was purchased from Gary F. Heurich. The easement addresses development rights and does not provide any public access or recreation rights to the subject property.

The Adirondack Nature Conservancy/Adirondack Land Trust transferred a one acre parcel (Goldsmith) in 1998 on the west side of Lake Shore Road. One hundred eleven (111) acres were purchased in 1999 from Robert and Mary Davis to eliminate a partial in-holding in the southwest of the wild forest area that was enclosed by State lands on three sides.

DEC management to date on these parcels has been limited to boundary line identification and maintenance, signing, and administration of the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) and applicable rules and regulations.

The Bouquet River Association in 1997 was given permission to remediate trail erosion on two former logging roads. The work consisted of clearing downed trees and waist-high vegetation, cleaning clogged culverts, and installing water bars.

Management of the area is carried out by DEC's Forest Preserve management staff with support from the Office of Public Protection and Division of Operations headquartered at DEC's Regional Office in Ray Brook.

The Westport Boat Launch Site was upgraded in 2000. It can accommodate thirty cars with trailers and six car only lanes. It has a two-lane concrete ramp with aluminum docks, and toilet facilities and is administered by DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Even with its proximity to Interstate 87 and nearby communities, use of the SRMWF remains low compared to other Forest Preserve lands in Essex County. Its newness, small size, lack of developed recreation facilities and lack of recognition contributes to low visitation.

## **II. WILD FOREST MANAGEMENT GOALS**

Article XIV of the New York State Constitution and the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (1987) set management guidelines and criteria for Wild Forest Areas. These legal mandates provide the basis upon which all management actions are based.

DEC's goals for the SRMWF are as follows:

- ▶ To provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's natural setting and natural resources in accordance with the APSLMP.
- ▶ To encourage, within constitutional constraints, those types of outdoor recreation that afford enjoyment of area resources without destroying wild forest character or natural resource quality.
- ▶ To preserve and protect all sites of known cultural resource value within the Wild Forest boundaries.

These goals are intentionally broad-based, not only to serve present resource and human needs, but to provide a basis for future planning as resource and social conditions change.

### **III. BIOPHYSICAL RESOURCES**

The following basic elements are the physical/biological, social and managerial factors that must be considered in developing a unit management plan for the SRMWF. One of the first prerequisites of planning is to “save all the pieces.” The following narratives describe the elements for which the management program, appropriate to a Wild Forest classification, is presented in Part VII.

#### **A. Geology**

Scientists estimate the basement rocks of Split Rock Mountain were formed 900 to 1200 million years ago during Precambrian times (Isachsen, 1991). The rocks were formed by the intrusion and crystallization of magma (molten rock) as it cooled deep in the earth. Rising magma uplifted the overlying rock strata to form the bedrock of the mountain. The bedrock is composed of two primary rock types: metaplutonic rocks of igneous origin and metamorphic rock of sedimentary origin.

Metaplutonic rocks tend to be coarse-grained with a layered-like appearance and are commonly exposed at ground surface. Minerals are sufficiently large for identification. Examples include light-colored anorthosite granite and dark-colored gabbro. Both are rich in the rock-forming mineral plagioclase, part of the feldspar group of minerals. The former rock quarry at the south end of the mountain provides exposures that illustrate this rock type. The light-colored quarry rock is further cut by a contrasting dark basaltic dike. The dike is composed of gabbro, a dense, fine grained rock that formed when molten rock was pushed up into cracks of the overlying granite.

Metasedimentary rocks at Split Rock include light-colored dolomitic marble, quartzite and various kinds of gneiss. Originally deposited in horizontal layers, all of the layering has been disrupted, folded, and faulted by magma. This is best demonstrated by a narrow band of white marble found near the rock quarry that extends northward near the crest of the mountain. However, the predominate rock type found in this grouping is leucogranitic gneiss. It is light-colored and is characterized by bands of darker-colored minerals. Leucogranitic gneiss is a host rock to the magnetite iron ore bodies typically found in the eastern Adirondacks. Two iron mines were developed on the east side of the mountain in the 1870's as evidenced by a talus slope of rock debris at the edge of Lewis Clearing Bay. The short-life of the mine may be attributed to their low grade iron content of 32.8% Fe (Kemp, 1910). The exposed bedrock at this location has a reddish rusty-like tint indicative of its iron content.

West of the mountain, parallel to Lakeshore Road, there is an obvious fault line, a break in the rock structure. This indicates past rock movement up and down. Scientists speculate that the rock structure below Webb Royce Swamp slipped down as Split Rock Mountain was uplifted or vice versa (Dawson, 1989) and cross faults run perpendicular to the main fault line. There is also an abrupt change in the bedrock geology here.

To the west, sedimentary rocks, Beekmantown and Chazy limestones underlie Webb Royce Swamp and extend northeasterly to Whallon Bay. The bedrock traces its origin to the Ordovician Period of geologic time, 425-500 million years ago. Ordovician rocks were made when the ancestral Adirondacks were submerged by a shallow inland sea that covered the continental crust. In this sea, limestones were formed, deposited as fine-grained carbonate materials in layers. Beekmantown limestones are the older rock (early Ordovician) that lie beneath the swamp and run south-westerly. Chazy limestones are newer

(early middle Ordovician) and extend northerly into Whallon Bay. Both are fossil bearing rock containing the remains of invertebrate organisms. Deep clay deposits cover the limestone unless exposed by rock outcrops near Lake Champlain.

During the Pleistocene Period, the entire area was subject to continental glaciation with some ice sheets estimated to be 10,000 feet thick atop and around the mountain. As the ice receded, the ridges of Split Rock Mountain were either smoothed or abruptly sharpened by the grinding action of the ice. Glacial till, an unsorted mixture of clay, sand, gravel, and boulders, was transported to lower slopes. Isolated large boulders, called erratics, many 20 or more feet in diameter, are common on the mountain's west slopes. They were deposited on the lower slopes away from their site of origin when the ice melted.

The Champlain Valley became a temporary estuary of the sea following the retreat of the continental ice sheet. Areas undergoing erosion next to the melting ice sheet supplied sediments to the sea and were deposited. This accounts for the thick clay and fine silt deposits that make up the agricultural soils surrounding Webb Royce Swamp.

## **B. Soils**

Broad soil maps for the unit are available from the Adirondack Park Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). These maps depict a variety of soil associations that change dramatically east to west. Soil associations show a distinctive pattern of soils that are found on a particular landscape or location. Their names are based on their dominant constituents, such as the "Vergennes-Kingsbury" association, which describes a deep soil, moderately well to somewhat poorly drained, fine textured, found on lake plains.

Six major soil associations blanket the area:

Rock Outcrop - Soils composed of glacial till with large areas of exposed bedrock as found on the east side of Split Rock Mountain facing Lake Champlain. Often found with the Lyman- Ricker Complex that would have 15 to 60 % slopes. These are shallow soils, generally less than 10 inches deep, somewhat excessively drained (dry) moderately coarse-textured, moderate to very steep. Limitations for recreational development exist in this soil type. Problems include steepness, very stony and bouldery with a great deal of surface rock.

Lyman-Ricker Complex - Very rocky soils on side slopes. Lyman soils are very shallow to bedrock, well- drained, low lime, loamy soils formed in glacial till deposits. Limitations for recreational development exist in this soil type.

Amenia-Nellis - This is an upland soil association that rises above the lake plain, and forms many of the glacial till ridges on Split Rock Mountain. They are moderately well drained, medium textured soils found on uplands. These soils are a mix of fine sandy loam, or fine sandy glacial till with slow permeability. Lower flat depressions, retain water, making them seasonally wet.

Charlton Association - Immediately west of the mountain, this association is characterized as very stony, and sloping. Soils tend to be deep, moderately coarse, and medium- textured, developed from glacial till. Rock outcrops occur in scattered areas. Slope, stones, and some boulders limit recreation development in these soils. Some areas were cleared and farmed on the uplands.

Vergennes-Kingsbury - Soil associations change radically as the former lake plain is entered west of the mountain. This soil association occupies nearly level and gently sloping ground. Its soils are formed in glacio-lacustrine deposits of calcareous clays, low in sand and silt. Soils are deep, moderately well to poorly drained, and fine textured. Surface water drains slowly and the ground may have a perched water table during wet seasons of the year. Seasonal wetness and slow permeability are limiting factors. Several areas bordering Webb-Royce are in agriculture or were previously farmed.

Kingsbury-Covington - This association occupies nearly level to gently rolling terrain bordering Beaver Brook and Webb-Royce Swamp. Soil components are formed in calcareous-marine or lacustrine deposits. Soils are deep, somewhat poorly- drained, and fine to medium textured. They are slowly permeable with a perched water table that fluctuates during wetter periods of the year. Seasonal or prolonged wetness, very slow permeability, and fine textures (highly erodible) limit these areas for recreation.

### **C. Climate**

The climate of the SRMWF is much different than its High Peaks counterparts 20 miles west. The mean July temperature is 68°F, compared to 64°F in the High Peaks. The frost-free season (135 days average) next to Lake Champlain lasts approximately 30 days longer than in the mountains to the west. The most significant climatic variation is the amount of precipitation the area receives. Annual precipitation is 30 inches per year as compared to the Central Adirondacks which receives more than 40 inches per year. The eastern and southern slopes of Split Rock Mountain, often sustain dry summer winds from the south, receive more solar radiation, and are considerably drier than the rest of the region. This moisture gradient accounts for many variations in the amount and type of vegetation found on the mountain. For instance, the Appalachian/Oak/Pine coevertype is most unique (See description under Part III, F. 1).

### **D. Air Quality**

Air quality in the UMP area is good to excellent. Air quality is likely to be adversely affected from south winds blowing more particulate matter from the Ticonderoga area, a higher industrial area than the immediate area surrounding the Wild Forest. Section 6 NYCRR Part 274 states that air quality within the political boundaries of Essex County shall be maintained at a Level I. The land use associated with this classification level is predominately used for timber, agricultural crops, dairy farming or recreation. Habitation and industry are sparse. There is very little industry in the vicinity of the unit planning area.

In the Adirondack Mountains from 1992 through 1999, sulfates declined in 92 percent of a representative sample of lakes, selected by the Adirondack Lakes Survey Corporation (ALSC), but nitrates increased in 48 percent of those lakes. The decrease in sulfates is consistent with decreases in sulfur emissions and deposition, but the increase in nitrates is inconsistent with the stable levels of nitrogen emissions and deposition.



Continued monitoring by collection and analysis of acid deposition will allow the monitoring network to determine if improvements will continue as a result of reductions of SO<sub>2</sub>- and NO<sub>4</sub>- legislated in the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA).

#### Effects of Acidic Deposition on Forest Systems

At present, the mortality and decline of red spruce at high elevations in the Northeast and observed reductions in red spruce growth rates in the southern Appalachians are the only cases of significant forest damage in the United States for which there is strong scientific evidence that acid deposition is a primary cause (National Science and Technology Council Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, 1998). The following findings of the National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program (1998) provide a broad overview of the effects of acidic deposition on the forests of the Adirondacks.

The interaction of acid deposition with natural stress factors has adverse effects on certain forest ecosystems. These effects include:

- ▶ Increased mortality of red spruce in the mountains of the Northeast. This mortality is due in part to exposure to acid cloud water, which has reduced the cold tolerance of these red spruce, resulting in frequent winter injury and loss of foliage.
- ▶ Reduced growth and/or vitality of red spruce across the high-elevation portion of its range.
- ▶ Decrease supplies of certain nutrients in soils to levels at or below those required for healthy growth.

Nitrogen deposition, in addition to sulfur deposition, is now recognized as an important contributor to declining forest ecosystem health both at low and at higher elevations. Adverse effects occur through direct impacts via increased foliar susceptibility to winter damage, foliar leaching, leaching of soil nutrients, elevation of soil aluminum levels, and/or creation of nutrient imbalances. Excessive amounts of nitrogen cause negative impacts on soil chemistry similar to those caused by sulfur deposition in certain sensitive high-elevation ecosystems.

#### Sensitive Receptors

High-elevation spruce-fir ecosystems in the eastern United States epitomize sensitive soil systems. Base cation stores are generally very low, and soils are near or past their capacity to retain more sulfur or nitrogen. Deposited sulfur and nitrogen, therefore, pass directly into soil water, which leaches soil aluminum and minimal amounts of calcium, magnesium, and other base cations out of the root zone. The low availability of these base cation nutrients, coupled with the high levels of aluminum that interfere with roots taking up these nutrients can result in plants not having sufficient nutrients to maintain good growth and health.

Sugar maple decline has been studied in the eastern United States since the 1950s. One of the recent studies suggests that the loss of crown vigor and incidence of tree death is related to the low supply of calcium and magnesium to soil and foliage (Driscoll, 2002).

Exposure to acidic clouds and acid deposition has reduced the cold tolerance of red spruce in the Northeast, resulting in frequent winter injury. Repeated loss of foliage due to winter injury has caused crown deterioration and contributed to high levels of red spruce mortality in the Adirondack Mountains of New York, the Green Mountains of Vermont, and the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

Acid deposition has contributed to a regional decline in the availability of soil calcium and other base cations in high-elevation and mid-elevation spruce-fir forests of New York and New England and the southern Appalachians. The high-elevation spruce-fir forests of the Adirondacks and Northern New England are identified together as one of the four areas nationwide with a sensitive ecosystem and subject to high deposition rates.

#### Effects of Acidic Deposition on Hydrologic Systems

New York's Adirondack Park is one of the most sensitive areas in the United States affected by acidic deposition. The Park consists of over six million acres of forest, lakes, streams and mountains interspersed with dozens of small communities, and a large seasonal population fluctuation. However, due to its geography and geology, it is one of the most sensitive regions in the United States to acidic deposition and has been impacted to such an extent that significant native fish populations have been lost and signature high elevation forests have been damaged.

There are two types of acidification which affect lakes and streams. One is a year-round condition when a lake is acidic all year long, referred to as chronically or critically acidic. The other is seasonal or episodic acidification associated with spring melt and/or rain storm events. A lake is considered insensitive when it is not acidified during any time of the year. Lakes with acid-neutralizing capability (ANC) values below 0  $\mu\text{eq/L}$  are considered to be chronically acidic. Lakes with ANC values between 0 and 50  $\mu\text{eq/L}$  are considered susceptible to episodic acidification; ANC may decrease below 0  $\mu\text{eq/L}$  during high-flow conditions in these lakes. Lakes with ANC values greater than 50  $\mu\text{eq/L}$  are considered relatively insensitive to inputs of acidic deposition (Driscoll et al. 2001). Watersheds which experience episodic acidification are very common in the Adirondack Region. A 1995 EPA Report to Congress estimated that 70% of the target population lakes are at risk of episodic acidification at least once during the year.

In addition to sensitive lakes, the Adirondack region includes thousands of miles of streams and rivers which are also sensitive to acidic deposition. While it is difficult to quantify the impact, it is certain that there are large numbers of Adirondack brooks that will not support native Adirondack brook trout. Over half of these Adirondack streams and rivers may be acidic during spring snowmelt, when high aluminum concentrations and toxic water conditions adversely impact aquatic life. This adverse effect will continue unless further limits are placed on emissions of acid rain precursors. Acid ion depositions, "acid rain," has apparently had little impact on water resources in the SRMWF. Data obtained for waters adjacent to the unit suggest no immediate problem.

#### Permanent Long-Term Monitoring (LTM) sites in and around this unit.

The ALSC has not surveyed any waters in this unit. Four ponds were surveyed in the Town of Westport, Essex County, during the period 1984-87. None of these ponds are within five miles of the SRMWF lands. Summaries of those ponded waters data can be found at (<http://www.adirondacklakessurvey.com>), see ALS Pond Information.

## **E. Water and Wetlands**

All water on Split Rock Mountain drains into Lake Champlain. To the east, numerous intermittent streams drain directly into the lake. On the west, all water drains into the Bouquet River via Beaver Brook before entering the lake. A small tributary of Beaver Brook is the outlet of Webb Royce Swamp. A small portion of Webb Royce Swamp is privately- owned.

The natural ecology of Webb Royce Swamp (250 acres) is cyclical over time corresponding to tree growth and beaver activity. The beavers leave the swamp when their food supply is depleted and, consequently, the water level recedes. When food supplies are abundant, beavers return and raise water levels. The period of time between the beavers leaving and returning is thought to be approximately 10-15 years. This wetland permaculture creates ponds with a variety of aquatic and wetland herbs; in turn, the drained sites support grasses and sedges and shrubs and new tree growth over time (Houlihan & Jenkins, 2001).

Approximately 252 acres of regulated wetland exists within the SRMWF. Small wetlands (less than 5 acres) are encountered on the mountain in crevices or small depressions. These are referred to as “pocket wetlands” and occupy less than 10 total acres on the mountain. See wetlands map of the unit in Appendix Fourteen.

Split Rock Mountain’s Lake Champlain shoreline is steep and deep. Sound anchorages outside of Barn Rock Bay and Snake Den Harbor are scarce. Lake depths south and west of the Palisades range from 200 to 300 feet deep.

The Bouquet River, along the proposed Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site, is classified “Recreational” by the Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers Act. There are no improvements and no defined parking area here presently but fishermen access the Bouquet at this location.

## **F. Plants, Animals and Fish**

### **1. Forest/Aquatic/Terrestrial Vegetation**

The geographical position of the SRMWF on the east side of the Adirondacks creates unusual variations in climate, elevation, and soils, which in turn affects vegetation. The tract lies in a life transition zone between northern and southern species as influenced by the moderating climatic effects of Lake Champlain.

Early forest fires on the south and south-east slopes, pre-forest preserve logging, wind, and ice storms have changed the forest cover of the mountain and created a diversity of forest cover types and species. The principal forest types and ecological communities are composed of the following:

Appalachian Oak-Pine - This is the dominant forest of Split Rock Mountain on the drier ridges and benches with rocky soils that are well-drained. The canopy is dominated by a mixture of oaks and pines. The oaks include red and white oak. The pines are pitch, red, and white pine. Other species include American beech, red and sugar maples, bitternut and shagbark hickories. This is a very important forest community to a host of wildlife because of the food and shelter it affords.

Wildfires, natural and human induced, appear to have had a significant influence on this forest community on Split Rock Mountain. The south and south-easterly facing slopes of the mountain are extremely dry in early spring (before leaf-out) and mid-summer. Despite the lack of historical records documenting the occurrence of fires, the mountain's Appalachian oak-pine forests are littered with charred stumps and tree snags, bark damage on living trees, natural openings and blueberry fields indicating that fire has been present in maintaining the character of this ecological community.

Northern Hardwoods - A hardwood forest of American beech and sugar maple is a broadly defined forest cover type that occurs on moist and well-drained soils of the mountain's lower slopes. Common associates are basswood, white ash, yellow birch, red maple, and eastern hop hornbeam. Extensive areas suffered damage (breakage and windthrow) from the Ice Storm of 1998.

Hemlock - This is the natural climax forest on Split Rock Mountain. It is found in the moist steep ravines and gullies of the mountain's north and west facing slopes. Hemlocks provide important winter sheltering areas for whitetail deer on Split Rock Mountain. Snow depths are less under a hemlock over-story and temperatures and wind conditions are less severe. Hemlocks on the mountain's upper slopes sustained heavy damage from the Ice Storm of 1998. A local drought in the summer of 1999 caused mortality of trees growing in shallow soils. Severe winds associated with Hurricane Floyd in September, 1999 added to the mortality.

Successional Northern Hardwoods on Abandoned Fields - This is an early successional hardwood forest or a mixed forest that occurs on former farm fields and provides important wildlife habitat. These areas are on the lower slopes of Split Rock Mountain and others border Webb Royce Swamp. Some of the poorly drained fields were abandoned more than twenty years ago and have reverted to light-requiring, wind dispersed species. Vegetation is patchy with scattered herbs, shrubs, and tree saplings. Dominant species include aspen, black and pin cherry, crab apple, gray and white birch, red maple, red alder, white and green ash. Red osier, sumac, and grey dogwoods are prevalent in all former fields.

Open Fields - The Open Space Institute holds reserved agricultural rights to 197 acres of land near Webb Royce Swamp. In 2001, four fields, totaling 73 acres, were devoted to corn and hay production.

Shallow Emergent Marsh and Shrub Swamp - These wetland communities enclose Webb Royce Swamp in a wide wet depression between Split Rock Mountain to the east and agricultural fields to the west. Soils are permanently saturated and seasonally flooded. Water depths are shallow and drop by mid to late summer. Beavers are a significant factor in maintaining water levels that support these communities. Fringe areas are predominately a sedge meadow. A hardwood shrub swamp, characterized by red alder, red osier dogwood, meadow-sweet, willow, button and steuple bush, occupies a transition zone between upland communities.

## Endangered, Threatened and Species of Special Concern

The New York Natural Heritage Program (2001) lists four important plant species in the SRMWF that are listed as threatened or endangered in New York State. The plant dwarf sand- cherry (*Prunus pumila var depressa*) is a threatened species and usually found along the shore of Lake Champlain among cobbles and small boulders in small sandy pockets. Rock- cress (*Draba arabisans*), a threatened species, is usually found near the Lake Champlain shoreline in a dry oak woods situation. Douglas knotweed (*Polygonum douglasii*) also a threatened species, is found along the Lake Champlain shoreline and usually scattered along soil- bearing cracks along bedrock ledges. Veiny meadow-rue (*Thalictrum arabians*), an endangered species, is likewise found along the shoreline of Lake Champlain near rocky points. See Appendix Seven for a complete listing of Natural Heritage plant species.

## Vegetation Current Status

### Invasive Plants

Nonnative, invasive species directly threaten biological diversity and the high quality natural areas in the Adirondack Park. Invasive plant species can alter native plant assemblages, often forming monospecific stands of very low quality forage for native wildlife, and drastically impacting the ecological functions and services of natural systems. Not yet predominant across the Park, invasive plants have the potential to spread - undermining the ecological, recreational, and economic value of the Park's natural resources.

Because of the Adirondack Park's continuous forested nature and isolation from the normal "commerce" found in other parts of the State, its systems are largely functionally intact. In fact, there is no better opportunity in the global temperate forested ecosystem to forestall and possibly prevent the alteration of natural habitats by invasive plant species.

Prevention of nonnative plant invasions, Early Detection/Rapid Response (ED/RR) of existing infestations, and monitoring are primary objectives in a national strategy for invasive plant management and necessitates a well-coordinated, area-wide approach. A unique opportunity exists in the Adirondacks to work proactively and collaboratively to detect, contain, or eradicate infestations of invasive plants before they become well established, and to prevent further importation and distribution of invasive species, thus maintaining a high quality natural landscape.

The Department has entered into a partnership agreement with the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP). The mission of the APIPP is to document invasive plant distributions and to advance measures to protect and restore native ecosystems in the Park through partnerships with Adirondack residents and institutions. Partner organizations operating under a Memorandum of Understanding are the Adirondack Nature Conservancy, Department of Environmental Conservation, Adirondack Park Agency, Department of Transportation, and Invasive Plant Council of NYS. The APIPP summarizes known distributions of invasive plants in the Adirondack Park and provides this information to residents and professionals alike. Specific products include a geographic database for invasive plant species distribution; a central internet website for invasive plant species information and distribution maps; a list-serve discussion group to promote community organization and communication regarding invasive species issues; and a compendium of educational materials and best management practices for management. Because of the intermingled nature of private and public lands and embedded transport vectors, State Lands are, and are likely to be, affected by infestations of invasive species and subsequent degradation of natural system function. APIPP has prepared a report for

NYS DEC staff with current inventory and management information on documented invasive plant species infestations that threaten exemplary communities and conservation targets within the unit.

### Terrestrial Invasive Plant Inventory

In 1998 the Adirondack Nature Conservancy's Invasive Plant Project initiated Early Detection/Rapid Response (ED/RR) surveys along Adirondack Park roadsides. Expert and trained volunteers reported 412 observations of 10 plant species throughout the area surveyed, namely NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) Right-of-Ways (ROW). In 1999 the Invasive Plant Project was expanded to include surveying back roads and the "backcountry" (undeveloped areas away from roads) to identify the presence or absence of 15 invasive plant species. Both surveys were conducted under the auspices of the Invasive Plant Council of New York "Top Twenty List" of non-native plants likely to become invasive within New York State. A continuum of ED/RR surveys now exists under the guidance of the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP).

Assessments from these initial ED/RR surveys determined that four (4) terrestrial plant species would be targeted for control and management based upon specific criteria such as geophysical setting, abundance and distribution, multiple transport vectors and the likelihood of human-influenced disturbance. The four Priority terrestrial invasive plants species are purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), common reed (*Phragmites australis*), Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) and garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*).

The Adirondack Park is susceptible to further infestation by invasive plant species intentionally or accidentally introduced to this ecoregion. While many of these species are not currently designated a priority species by APIPP, they may become established within or in proximity to a Unit and require resources to manage, monitor and restore the site.

Infestations located within and in proximity to a unit may expand and spread to uninfected areas and threaten natural resources within a unit; therefore it is critical to identify infestations located both within and in proximity to a unit and then assess high risk areas and prioritize Early Detection Rapid Response (ED/RR) and management efforts.

Terrestrial invasive plant species documented in or in proximity to Split Rock Wild Forest include the following: Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*).

*For species specific information regarding natural history, ecology and reproduction, please refer to the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England program website at:*  
<http://webapps.lib.uconn.edu/ipane/search.cfm>.

### Terrestrial Locations

There are two (2) purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) infestations affecting this Unit.

There are two (2) Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) infestations affecting this Unit.

There is one (1) common reed (*Phragmites australis*) infestation affecting this Unit.

## Observances of New Non-Native Invasive Plant Species

There are multiple Black Swallow-wort (*Vincetoxicum nigrum*) infestations occurring north of SRMWF, at Jones Point, along the shores of Lake Champlain. These infestations are the only documented occurrences of this critical new threat within the Adirondack Park. These Black Swallow-wort infestations threaten the globally rare Ram's Head Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium arietinum*). *Cypripedium arietinum* is ranked by New York Natural Heritage Program as G2 and S2 and has a legal status of "Threatened" (Young and Weldy 2003).

## Aquatic Locations

Eurasian watermilfoil, Curlyleaf pondweed, Water chestnut, European frog-bit, and Yellow floating-heart are confirmed in Lake Champlain.

## 2. Wildlife

The SRMWF provides important habitat for a variety of wildlife. Since it is the largest block of undeveloped forest land along the west side of Lake Champlain, it provides seclusion and nesting and rearing areas for many species. It is part of a narrow forested belt of state and private lands that serves as a protective corridor for wildlife moving across the Bouquet River Valley between the Adirondack foothills and Lake Champlain. Combined with its diversity of steep rock cliffs, talus slopes, mixed-aged forests, active and abandoned farm fields, and wetlands, the SRMWF affords varied habitats on which many species depend.

A comprehensive wildlife inventory has yet to be conducted; however, most wildlife common to the Eastern Adirondacks and the Champlain Valley have been documented (Adirondack Nature Conservancy, 1997).

There are a large number of birds (Appendix Two) that may be found near Split Rock Mountain during the course of the year. Some are itinerant species passing through on their way north or south, some are irruptive only appearing some years, some are permanent residents, and many are migrants only here during the breeding season (MacDonald, 2000).

Situated in the Atlantic flyway for migratory waterfowl and other wetland species, this area provides nesting and feeding sites for more than eighty percent of the bird species in the Adirondacks. Most notably, the following species of special interest have been observed: the black crowned night heron, great blue heron, bald eagle, osprey, peregrine falcon, turkey vulture, and a host of migratory songbirds, such as the scarlet tanager and black-throated green warblers.

With the exception of moose and pine marten, most Adirondack mammals are encountered on the property. Larger mammals living in this area include white-tailed deer, black bear (occasional), bobcat, coyote, red and gray fox, beaver, mink, muskrat, river otter, striped skunk, porcupine, cottontail rabbit and varying hare. Smaller mammals residing in the area include: shrews,

moles, mice, long-tailed weasels, eastern chipmunks, red and gray squirrels. See Appendix Four for a listing of mammal species that may occur in the unit.

Big game, both deer and bear, exist in moderate numbers in the unit, and hunting seasons are set according to management unit 5G in the New York State hunting guide published annually. Trapping regulations are also identified and set by the same management unit. Appendix Five contains calculated deer, bear and furbearer harvest figures.

A deer yard or deer wintering area is any piece of landscape where deer tend to concentrate during winter. Deer yards typically have features that provide thermal benefits and/or mobility advantages during periods of cold and deep snow. In the Adirondacks, deer yards are often associated with dense conifer cover which helps to reduce rapid snow accumulation, provides shelter from winds, and limits radiational cooling during the evening. South-facing slopes are also used by wintering deer, where lower snow accumulation and favorable sun exposure provide similar benefits. Better quality deer yards also have adjacent regenerating hardwood components that provide available woody browse during milder conditions.

In the Adirondacks, deer may use the same yarding areas annually, although the precise boundaries change over time with succession. Deer use within yarding areas will also change annually in response to winter severity. The maintenance and protection of winter deer yards remains a concern of wildlife managers, particularly in the Adirondacks, as they fulfill a critical component of the seasonal habitat requirements of white-tailed deer.

The SRMWF was inventoried for wintering deer yards during the early 1970's. At that time deer were wintering in most of the Wild Forest east of the Lake Shore Road. See Appendix Fifteen for an historic deer yard map. The mountain likely supports a winter deer herd due to its warmer winter temperatures near Lake Champlain and forest cover types that offer food and shelter. Pending further investigation by the Bureau of Wildlife, DEC, deer yard information will be updated in the next revision of the SRMWF.

Amphibians and reptiles are characteristic of the Lake Champlain Basin. Of these, many are abundant, such as the northern leopard frog, gray tree frog, common garter snake, eastern american toad, red-spotted newt, and painted turtle. The timber rattlesnake is a threatened species found on Split Rock Mountain and is discussed below. This animal is reputedly at its most northern range of the species on the East Coast (Adirondack Nature Conservancy, 1995). In Appendix Six, amphibians and reptiles that have been documented in the unit are listed.

#### Sensitive, Threatened, Endangered Species, and Special Natural Communities

New York's Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) is responsible for completing inventories of rare plants, rare animals, and natural communities of ecological significance (See Appendix Eight). The program maintains a computerized biological inventory and conducts field surveys of sensitive habitats. Nine sites have been identified on the SRMWF and more studies are anticipated. This information is used in environmental reviews and analysis of any proposed project on the natural resources of an area including vegetation, water, wetlands, and other wildlife. Although the specific location of these species is exempted from public Freedom of Information Laws (FOIL) to protect the species, this information is used and integrated by DEC in all resource planning activities.



One of the most notable species found on the SRMWF is the timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*). New York State gave special protection as a threatened species in 1983. The local population is believed to be at the northernmost range of the species found in New York. New York's Natural Heritage Program surveys indicate a healthy and stable population on the mountain (Briesch, 2001). Timber rattlesnakes in northeastern New York prefer well-drained oak-hickory forests consisting of three community types that are necessary in order to fulfill the snake's habitat requirements. These community types include the following: the denning area (southeast-oriented talus slides located below a cliff face), the basking area (open rocky and grassy areas near the den which are used primarily for basking, shedding and birthing), and summer range (predominantly northern hardwood forest used as summer foraging habitat and where knolls and rocky outcrops provide basking areas for mating and shedding) (Brown 1993). Timber rattlesnakes hibernate from early autumn through to early spring. After emerging in May, the active season lasts five months through September (Brown, 2001). The snakes move from the dens in the spring in a radius of 1.5-2.5 miles. Studies are conducted in over-wintering dens to monitor the population. This species plays an important ecological role in deciduous forest communities as a small mammal predator.

The five-lined skink (*Eumeces fasciatus*), a lizard, is present in the unit and is not listed as a species of special concern in New York State. The skinks population is of concern in neighboring Vermont. It is generally found in deciduous forests and is frequently associated with timber rattlesnake habitat. This species, like the timber rattlesnake, is at its northernmost range in New York State. By protecting the rattlesnake, populations of skinks are likely to be protected, as well. According to Briesch, 2001, the lizards are about 5-8 inches long and highly variable in color depending on age and sex. The young individuals stand out because they have a blue tail. They are active during the day and are only glimpsed because they move very quickly. "You just see a blur," says Briesch. They like the dry boulder fields on Split Rock Mountain where they can retreat to mossy cover.

Jefferson salamanders (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*), a species of special concern, are considered vernal pool obligates. The salamanders require pools that remain deep long enough to complete metamorphosis. Typical Jefferson salamander breeding pools are ringed with scattered shrub vegetation in upland deciduous forest. Here, the species shares its habitat with other reported SRMWF species including wood frogs, spotted salamanders, and blue-spotted salamanders. Although vernal pools are a limiting habitat parameter for Jefferson salamanders, adults spend a very short period actually using the pools, remaining there only during the breeding season (Pfingsten and Downs, 1989). Consequently, the surrounding forested habitat used during the remainder of the year (including during hibernation) is of utmost importance.

The blue-spotted salamander (*Ambystoma laterale*), also a species of special concern, is more tolerant of disturbed areas and open habitat than is the Jefferson salamander (Klemens, 1993, Pfingsten and Downs, 1989). Although blue-spotted salamanders also breed in temporary pools, they also use a variety of other habitats including roadside ditches, field ponds, and other wetland habitats. Even though blue-spotted salamanders are most often encountered above ground on wet nights, they also are found under cover objects such as fallen logs and debris (Klemens, 1993).

The peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) is a state and federally protected raptor and listed as an endangered species. They inhabit the cliff areas of Split Rock Mountain. Adult falcons have few natural enemies, but eggs and young chicks are preyed upon by great horned owls and raccoons. Human disturbances, such as rock climbers on cliffs, can disturb the nests. Three basic habitat requirements are necessary for nesting Peregrine Falcons: open country in which to hunt, sufficient food resources (i.e., other avian species), and steep, rocky cliff faces for nesting (Ratcliffe, 1993). Typical nesting sites for peregrines include a partially-vegetated ledge (with both herbaceous and woody species) that is large enough for at least several young to move about during the pre-fledging period. Ideally, the eyrie ledge also is sheltered by an overhang that protects the chicks from inclement weather. Occasionally, peregrines may nest in old Common Raven nests. Suitable perch sites (e.g., snags, live trees, ledges) are located on the cliff face near the eyrie, on more distant sections of the cliff, and on the cliff rim.

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), a threatened species, have been observed on Split Rock Mountain, but no nesting pairs have been documented in the area to date (2003). In winter, bald eagles are frequently seen flying over Split Rock if the lake is not yet frozen. Bald eagles were once classified endangered in New York State. Due to a vigorous restoration project that lasted from 1976 to 1988, 198 eagles were released at four sites in New York, and numbers of nesting bald eagles have increased (12 nests in the Adirondack Region alone in the year 2002) thereby, delisting them from the endangered classification.

The small footed bat (*Myotis leibii*), also a species of special concern, has been identified within the unit. During the winter months, these bats are most often found within caves and abandoned mines near forested areas. Because this bat is thought to occur in such small numbers, the likelihood of encountering this bat is extremely low. For this reason, little is known about this species habitats when not in hibernation. If further research indicates additional wintering habitat within the unit, recommendations will be initiated where feasible to protect such habitat.

Northern harriers (*Circus cyaneus*) are classified threatened in New York. This species is a confirmed nester in the unit. Habitat requirements of the harrier are open fields and wetland types. No facilities will be proposed near a nesting pair.

### **3. Fish**

Beaver Brook and a small tributary flowing down the west side of Split Rock Mountain are the only two perennial streams that support fish. These streams contain small populations of brook trout, black-nosed dace, and creek chub.

## **IV. SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **A. Cultural Resources and History**

The SRMWF cultural/historical components figure prominently in understanding the evolution of this unit. DEC has just begun inventorying historic sites in the unit and has collected a great deal of information. This information is important so that these resources are not destroyed inadvertently.

Morris Glenn's The Story of Three Towns, Westport, Essex, and Willsboro, 1977 offers the most definitive cultural history of Split Rock Mountain and adjoining areas.

Split Rock Mountain has been a conspicuous Lake Champlain landmark and meeting place used to guide Native Americans and Euro-Americans in historic times. The mountain's actual "split rock" is a small island that served as an easily distinguished landmark at the southeastern tip of Whallon Bay as travelers entered the broad lake. Split Rock has been identified by Abenaki peoples as an area of spiritual and cultural importance.

A number of local collectors have reported finding stone tools, projectile points, debitage and a catlinite pipe on the Split Rock property. While the locations of these finds have not been identified and the sites have not been inventoried, they demonstrate the time depth of human occupation and use of the area.

For centuries Split Rock Mountain had been used as an unofficial division line between the Algonquin tribes to the north and the Iroquois to the south. The 1713 Treaty of Utrecht at the conclusion of the Queen Anne's War, the second of the French and Indian Wars (1702-1713), used this landmark as the boundary between French and English interests in New York and New England. The French later ignored this boundary and moved south down the lake establishing Fort St. Frederic (Crown Point) in 1731 and Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga) in 1755. Split Rock also served as the provincial boundary between New York and Quebec prior to the American Revolution.

Grog Harbor (privately-owned) at the northeast end of Split Rock Mountain owes its name to an event in 1776 when a group of local American colonials from Essex captured an English bateau

and dumped its cargo of rum into Lake Champlain rather than letting the cargo be recaptured. After the revolution, a mid-lake ferry was established here to transfer goods and settlers from nearby Basin Harbor, Vermont.

Following the Revolution, the Split Rock area was settled and farmed. Area forests yielded saw timber, maple products, wood for charcoal and potash. Charcoal was an important cash crop to support area iron forges, and potash was used as a source of potassium fertilizer. Pine logs were rolled down the mountain into Lake Champlain and rafted to nearby sawmills. Pine lumber was thence shipped via canal boats north to markets in Montreal and south to Whitehall.

Early rock quarries were established on the mountain to mine granite for local building use, but little was shipped on a commercial scale due to competition from Vermont. A large quarry was opened by the Lake Champlain Granite Company north of Barn Rock Bay in 1891. Rock

was transported downhill via cable cars to a wharf on Barn Rock Bay and shipped south in canal boats. An on-site accident killed four men after its initial opening and the quarry was soon closed since the owners were required to pay substantial compensation for the tragedy.

In 1997 a Preliminary Cultural Resources Assessment of the Split Rock Mountain parcel was undertaken using National Park Service funds provided to the Lake Champlain Basin Program. In addition, the Department conducted a search of the archaeological site files of the New York State Museum and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. These investigations consisted of a review of archaeological and historic resource inventories, historic maps and documents and a walkover reconnaissance of the area. This survey identified a number of historic archaeological resources on the property, most apparently associated with the iron ore extraction and primary processing which took place on the property in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These include a number of building foundations, wells, mine cuts, road alignments and related features.

In addition to the terrestrial archaeological remains that have been located on the unit, a number of related resources have been identified in the adjacent waters of Lake Champlain. These resources include several ore barges, mine railroad cars, rails and related materials identified by investigators from the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. Side scan sonar and documentary research on SCUBA reconnaissance were techniques employed to obtain historical information. These discoveries were made as a part of a systematic survey of the bed of Lake Champlain being undertaken by the Museum and the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

Located just south of the SRMWF and in Lake Champlain is the Champlain II Submerged Heritage Preserve. This is the site of the submerged wreckage of the Champlain II which was a large passenger steamer that ran aground and sank in 1875. Marked with a buoy and interpreted through signs and a brochure, the preserve is open to scuba divers from May to September. The Champlain II which was opened in 1998 joins several dive preserves which have existed in Vermont waters for some time.

## **B. Economic Values**

Besides its many intrinsic values relative to watershed protection, preservation of wildlife and natural habitats, and outdoor recreation, the state lands in this area are an important asset to local and regional economies. These lands are an attraction to tourists and local users. Maintenance of their natural setting has a positive influence on private land values.

A direct economic benefit is the amount of land and school taxes paid to local governments for forest preserve lands. Pursuant to Real Property Tax Law §532(a), the People of the State of New York pay all local taxes on forest preserve lands. This is especially significant because state lands do not require the same infrastructure, government goods and services demanded by the private sector. The state government pays the same taxes on unimproved forest lands as private landowners do. State lands are assessed by local assessors and subject to review by the New York State Office of Real Property Services (formerly the State Board of Equalization and Assessment).

Tax payments for forest preserve lands in the Towns of Essex and Westport and the state's portion of the Heurich Conservation Easement are paid to the Essex County Treasurer who

disburses payment to the towns. Real property values and assessments are determined by local assessors based on comparable values of similar lands in each town. Pursuant to Real Property Tax Law §533, the State of New York pays approximately \$13,000 per year ( 83%) of the taxes on the 474 acres Heurich Conservation Easement, but does not pay any taxes on the buildings thereon. The fee owner pays the remaining taxes on this land.

Table 2. 1998 Land and School Taxes Paid on Forest Preserve Land in the SRMWF

<b>Town</b>	<b>Taxable Acres*</b>	<b>Total Taxes Paid</b>
Essex	448 ac.	\$4,286
Westport	2,781 ac.	\$59,371
<b>TOTALS :</b>	<b>3,229 ac.</b>	<b>\$63,657</b>

\*Taxable Acres: Not all areas are fully taxed. Some areas include agricultural exemptions and the Westport Boat Launch and the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Sites are tax exempt.

### **C. Public Use**

Since acquisition, the SRMWF has received local appreciation and use, but has suffered from unusual circumstances, such as damage from the Ice Storm of 1998. Several proposals to encourage public use and provide recreational improvements have not been pursued, because a unit management plan for this area had never been developed.

Very steep slopes, rugged terrain, thick vegetation, fallen timber from the Ice Storm of 1998, and a general lack of facilities contribute to low use. There is one trail register located at the entrance to the Lewis Clearing Bay Trail off Lake Shore Road. Public use of Split Rock Mountain is limited to the Lake Champlain shoreline, and an informal trail system that consists of former roads and unmarked footpaths. No estimates are available for use of Webb Royce Swamp, an area used by birders.

Day hiking, hunting, ice fishing on Lake Champlain, picnicking, SCUBA diving, and sightseeing, including wildflower and wildlife observation and photography, are all popular activities. From discussions with Law Enforcement personnel, most hiking parties are believed to be small, less than four people per party. Large, organized group-use is believed to be minimal from Forest Ranger reports. A trail register on the Lewis Clearing Bay trail, off Lake Shore Road, tallied 340 individuals during six months at year end of 2002. In 2003, 775 individuals signed in and in 2004, 945 were tallied.

Camping is limited to five designated shoreline campsites. There are no designated interior campsites. Low camping use is attributed to the general lack of water on the mountain. Winter use is related to cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and ice fishing. Snowmobiling is a minor use that provides access for Lake Champlain ice fishermen, including persons with disabilities, that fish in Lewis Clearing Bay and Snake Den Harbor. This use is directly related to the thickness of the ice in Lewis Clearing Bay and Snake Den Harbor. Some years there is no snowmobile use because there is not sufficient ice in the harbor to support safe public use. According to Forest Rangers, some illegal ATV use of this trail has been noted, but local snowmobile enthusiasts are usually quick to turn in violators because of the damage incurred to the trail system.

The diversity of the SRMWF offers many outstanding opportunities for viewing wildlife. Most of these are easily accessible by public road and/or the area's informal trail system. For example, the Champlain Palisades, 150 feet high cliffs, south of Snake Den Harbor are an important bird watching area for boaters who come to view bald eagles, peregrine falcons, ravens, and turkey vultures in the vicinity. Webb Royce Swamp is a popular wildlife viewing area and is open to waterfowl hunting. The adjoining agricultural leased lands have been stocked with pheasants and are open to public hunting.

The extensive natural resources and recreational opportunities available in this unit have attracted many organization's events and programs to the area. Organizations that have included this area in their program itineraries include the Champlain Valley Heritage Network, Lake Champlain Birder's Trail, the Lake Champlain Paddler's Trail, Lake Champlain Bike Ways, and Lake Champlain Byways Hike and Walk study.

#### **D. Man-Made Facilities**

##### Facilities Inventory

The SRMWF has retained a "wild forest character" because there is very little human use of the area at present.

##### 1. Trailheads and Parking Areas

One trailhead exists on the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest, with a five-vehicle gravel-surfaced parking facility located on Lake Shore Road near Split Rock mountain. It provides safe-off road parking for an informal trail system that leads to Barn Rock Bay, Lewis Clearing Bay, North Rim, and Snake Den Harbor.

There is a trail register, but no kiosk or entrance signs at this location. A gate blocks motor vehicle access beyond the trailhead. Some off-road parking occurs in old field locations at the north and south end of the mountain and near the west side of Webb Royce Swamp. The Town of Westport plows this area in winter.

##### 2. Gates

The former road to Lewis Clearing Bay is gated with a standard DEC yellow gate, complete with "Stop" and "Barrier Ahead" signs. It was installed in July of 2001 to curtail illegal motor vehicle use. There are no other gates on the unit.

##### 3. Primitive Tent Sites

Most recreation activity on SRMWF is day-use oriented. Very little camping occurs on the SRMWF, partly because very little water exists at most interior locations. Most camping is confined to a narrow shelf of land adjacent to Lake Champlain. Five campsites were designated as part of the Lake Champlain Paddlers' Trail. Each tent site is marked by a sign and consists of small flat camping area with a fire-ring. A trail register has been placed at two of five campsite locations: Barn Rock Bay and Snake Den Harbor but there has been no data collection to date due to lost sheets. Box-type pit privies (28" by 18") are located on four

of the five campsites. No other amenities are afforded. Routine maintenance is provided by DEC staff and the Lake Champlain Committee. Sites are located at the following locations: Barn Rock Bay (2), Ore Bed Bay, Palisades, and Snake Den Harbor. Tent site locations currently meet APSLMP sight and sound separation guidelines (more than 1/4 mile apart).

#### 4. Hiking Trails

The SRMWF does not have a DEC designated trail system. An informal user-created trail system has evolved following old roads that existed on the property before State purchase (See Table 3). All roads have been closed to motor vehicle use and some have evolved into informal hiking trails. Other areas have user-created trails to reach scenic viewpoints along the north rim of Split Rock Mountain. The former road network (10.7 miles) offers exceptional opportunities for hiking, all terrain biking (mountain biking), and cross-country skiing. However, several sections of these routes have been poorly located with long stretches of grade two to three times steeper than design standards recommended for hiking trails. These long, steep grades cannot support a stable trail, because the soils involved are compactable when moist and very susceptible to erosion. This trail system is neither signed nor marked, but has local names attached to each segment.

Table 3. Informal Trail System

<b>Trail Name:</b>	<b>Approximate Distance:</b>
Lewis Clearing Bay	1.7 mi.
Calamity	1.6 mi.
Cross-Over	0.9 mi.
Gary's Elbow	0.5 mi.
Barn Rock Bay	1.5 mi.
North Rim	2.8 mi.
Robin's Run	1.7 mi.
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10.7 mi.</b>

Weak links” in the system are found on the Barn Rock Bay, Robin’s Run, and North Rim trails. These have steep grades with erosion. A portion of the Calamity Trail has been flooded by beavers. Several sections are substandard and will have to be substantially improved and/or relocated if these trails are formally designated by DEC.

Over the years, trail maintenance efforts have not been regularly scheduled. No formal trail maintenance is programmed. Some volunteer and paid contractor work has occurred to clear debris from the Ice Storm of 1998 on trails to Lewis Clearing Bay, Barn Rock Bay, and on Robin’s Run. This was made possible by a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

#### 5. Snowmobile Trails

There is one DEC designated snowmobile trail that extends 1.7 miles from Lake Shore Road to Lewis Clearing Bay. This project was approved under the APA/DEC Memorandum of Understanding provisions for projects not covered by a specific approved unit management plan. The trail provides ice fisherman with access to Lake Champlain and the DEC is proposing to leave the trail as it is with no segment changes. There are no other DEC designated snowmobile trails in the SRMWF.

Snowmobile impacts to wetlands are thought to be negligible in the unit. Opportunities to reroute this portion of the trail are limited by terrain. This trail is not suitable for mechanical snow groomers.

#### 6. All Terrain Bicycle Trails

No trails have been designated for all terrain biking (mountain biking) in the SRMWF. Some all terrain bike enthusiasts have used the present system of trails. Sometimes bike users will park their bikes inside the woods and walk the trail systems also. No adverse effects of bike use have been documented on trails within the unit to date.

#### 7. Roads

There are no roads in the SRMWF open to public motorized use, ATV’s included. A gate was erected at the entrance to the Lewis Clearing Bay Trail in July of 2001 to curtail illegal motorized use. This gate has helped alleviate illegal motorized use on trail systems.

#### 8. Westport Boat Launch Site

The Westport Boat Launch Site (WBLS) provides important boating access to Lake Champlain and was modernized in 2000. The site provides parking for 30 cars with trailers plus six vehicles without trailers. The parking area is paved and has reserved parking spaces for persons with disabilities. The recent modernization did not represent a material expansion of the site’s use or capacity. The upgrade included installation of sheet metal pile bulkheads, a new concrete ramp, and the installation of modern, floating metal docks. There is a wooden toilet facility at the site. This restroom is to be rehabilitated to provide accessibility for people with disabilities.



A small tributary stream enters Lake Champlain immediately to the north of the boat launch site and this stream tends to deposit material in and adjacent to the ramp area. This deposition impedes the launching of boats, particularly during low water periods. In preparation of dredging at the WBLS, a jurisdictional inquiry was made to the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) which determined that the project was not under the purview of APA. An application was made to the US Army Corps of Engineers for a maintenance dredging permit. This permit was granted and allows up to three dredging events over a ten year period. A Water Quality Certification for the project has been granted from the DEC Division of Environmental Permits. Dredging occurred during the winter of 2002 when an approximate volume of 87 cubic yards of material was removed.

#### 9. Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site

Guideline 10 under the heading “Guidelines for Management and Use” on page 33 of the Master Plan provides for the opportunity for new fishing access sites in Wild Forest areas. Management guidelines are specified on page 37 of the Master Plan for fishing access sites and all guidelines must be fulfilled before approval of a fishing access site proposal.

This plan is proposing a 0.3 acre fishing access site on state land (Forest Preserve) at Whallonsburg to provide public access to the Bouquet River. The Bouquet River, in this section, is classified “Recreational” by the Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers Act. There are no improvements and no defined parking area here presently but fishermen access the Bouquet at this location. The Essex Fire Department has requested a modification of the site including regrading the river bank to accommodate its pumper trucks. Along with that modification, it is expected that a defined parking area (5 parking spaces) will be developed. The parking area will be consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act to accommodate persons with disabilities. All specifics relative to the proposed fishing access site, including any modification of this site to accommodate fire trucks will be submitted to the APA for consultation and approval.

### **E. Capacity of Resource to Withstand Use**

#### Carrying Capacity Concepts

The Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest, like any other natural area in our Forest Preserve, cannot withstand ever-increasing, unlimited visitor use without suffering the eventual loss of its essential, natural character. This much is intuitive. What is not intuitive, though, is how much use and of what type the whole area - or any particular site or area within it - can withstand before the impacts of such use cause serious degradation of the very resource being sought after and used. Such is a wildland manager’s most important and challenging responsibility, however: to work to ensure a natural area’s “carrying capacity” is not exceeded while concurrently providing for visitor use and benefit.

The term “carrying capacity” has its roots in range and wildlife sciences. As defined in the range sciences, carrying capacity means “the maximum number of animals that can be grazed on a land unit for a specific period of time without inducing damage to the vegetation or related resources” (Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, 1994). This concept, in decades past, was

modified to address recreational uses as well; although in its application to recreational use has been shown to be significantly flawed when the outcome sought has been the “maximum number” of people who should visit and recreate in an area such as the Split Rock Wild Forest. Much research had shown that the derivation of such a number is not useful.

Essentially, this is because the relationship between the amount of use and the resultant amount of impact is not linear (Krumpe and Stokes, 1993). For many types of activities, for instance, most of the impact occurs with only low levels of use. In the case of trail erosion, once soil starts to wash away, additional foot travel does not cause the impact upon the trail to increase proportionately. It has been discovered that visitor behavior, site resistance/resiliency, type of use, etc. may actually be more important in determining the amount of impact than the amount of use, although the total amount of use is certainly (and obviously) still a factor (Hammit and Cole, 1987).

This makes the manager’s job much more involved than simply counting, redirecting, and (perhaps) restricting the number of visitors in an area. Influencing visitor behavior can require a well-planned, multi-faceted educational program. Determining site resistance/resiliency requires research (often including much time, legwork and experimentation). Shaping the types of use impacting an area can call not only for education and research and development of facilities, but also the formulation and enforcement of a set of regulations which some users are likely to regard as objectionable.

Nevertheless, the shortcomings of a simple carrying capacity approach have become so apparent that the basic question has changed from the old one, “How many is too many?” to the new, more realistic one: “How much change is acceptable?” The DEC embraces this change in approach while recognizing the tasks it calls for in developing the best foundation for management actions. Professionally-informed judgements must be made such that carrying capacity is given definition in terms of resource and social conditions that are deemed acceptable; these conditions must be compared with the real, on-the-ground conditions; certain projections must be made; and management policies and actions must be drafted and enacted with an aim toward maintaining or restoring the conditions desired.

This shift in managers’ central focus - away from trying to determine how many visitors an area can accommodate to trying to determine what changes are occurring in the area and whether or not they are acceptable - is as critical in a Wild Forest area like the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest as it is in a Wilderness. All such areas are State Forest Preserve Units which must be protected, as per the State Constitution, as “forever wild.” Furthermore, the APSLMP dictates in the very definition of Wild Forest areas that their “essentially wild character” be retained.

The magnitude of the challenge here is made evident by other statements and acknowledgments found in the APSLMP concerning Wild Forest areas. The 1972 APSLMP claim that “[m]any of these areas are under-utilized” remains seemingly true, and from this determination and the determination that these areas “are generally less fragile, ecologically” comes a directive that “these areas should accommodate much of the future use of the Adirondack forest preserve.”

Clearly, a delicate balancing act is called for, and yet just as clearly, the Department’s management focus must remain on protecting the resource. “[F]uture use” is not quantified in the above directive, but it is generally quantified and characterized in the definition of Wild Forest as only “a somewhat higher degree of human use” when compared to Wilderness. And whereas certain

“types of outdoor recreation... should be encouraged,” they must fall “[w]ithin constitutional constraints... without destroying the wild forest character or natural resource quality” of the area.

A central objective of this plan is to lay out a strategy for achieving such a balance in the SRMWF. This strategy reflects important guidelines and principles, and it - along with the guidelines and principles - have directed the development of the management proposals which are detailed in Section VIII.

### Strategy

The long-term strategy for managing the SRMWF uses a combination of three generally accepted planning methods: (1) the goal-achievement process; (2) the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) model employed by the U.S. Forest Service; and (3) the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP) model employed by the National Park Service. Given the distinctly different, yet important purposes of these methods (particularly between the first method and the second two), there are clear benefits offered by employing a blend of these approaches here.

### Goal-Achievement Process

The goal-achievement process provides a framework for proposed management by means of the careful, stepwise development of key objectives and actions that serve to prescribe the Wild Forest conditions (goals) outlined by APSLMP guidelines. DEC is mandated by law to devise and employ practices that will attain these goals. For each management activity category included in Section IV of this plan, there is a written assessment of the current management situation and a set of assumptions about future trends in which the specific management proposals which follow are rooted.

### Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) and Visitor Experience and Resources Protection (VERP) Models

These methods both employ carrying capacity concepts, not as prescriptions of the total number of people who can visit an area, but as prescriptions of the desired resource and social conditions that should be maintained to minimum standards regardless of use.

Establishing and maintaining acceptable conditions depends on well-crafted management objectives which are explicit and which draw on managerial experience, research, inventory data, assessments and projections, public input, and common sense. When devised in this manner, objectives founded in the LAC and VERP models essentially dictate how much change will be allowed (or encouraged) to occur and where, as well as how management will respond to changes. Indicators (measurable variables that reflect conditions) are chosen, and standards (representing the bounds of acceptable conditions) are set, all so that management efforts can be effective in addressing unacceptable changes. A particular standard may be chosen so as to act as a simple trigger for management action (as in VERP), or it may be chosen to act as a kind of boundary which - given certain assessments - allows for management action before conditions deteriorate to the point of no longer meeting the standard (as in LAC).

Even well-conceived and executed efforts can prove ineffective, but when this is the case, management responses must be adjusted. Monitoring of resource and social conditions is absolutely critical. Both the LAC and VERP models rely on monitoring to provide systematic and periodic feedback to managers concerning specific conditions. However, since the VERP model was

developed to apply only to impacts from visitor use, some management issues in the SRMWF call for an approach that is properly in the LAC vein.

Since differences between LAC and VERP are not significant, choices are left up to managers. These choices are as evident as they need to be wherever this plan, in Section IV, calls for sets of management actions which incorporate them.

In outline, DEC's approach applies four factors in identifying potential management actions for an area:

- ▶ The identification of acceptable resource and social conditions as defined by measurable indicators;
- ▶ An analysis of the relationship between existing conditions and those desired;
- ▶ Determinations of the necessary management actions needed to achieve desired conditions; and,
- ▶ A monitoring program to see if objectives are being met.

A possible list of indicators which may be used by the DEC for measuring and evaluating acceptable change on the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest are:

- ▶ Condition of vegetation in camping areas and riparian areas near lakes and streams;
- ▶ Extent of soil erosion on trails and at campsites;
- ▶ Noncompliant behavior;
- ▶ Noise on trails and in campsites;
- ▶ Conflicts between different user groups;
- ▶ Diversity and distribution of plant and animal species;
- ▶ Air and water quality.

These indicators form the basis for the proposed management actions presented in Section VIII. Each applicable resource area or facility type identified in Section VIII will be assessed for its present condition, its desired future condition and how it will be measured. This approach will require flexibility, determination and patience. It may not be possible to complete all inventories and assessments called for by this strategy - and by the APSLMP - in this plan's five-year time frame. It will be important to show progress in achieving APSLMP goals and in gaining initial managerial experience and knowledge in applying this strategy to some carrying capacity questions and issues. Knowledge gained as a result of the implementation of this first SRMWF Unit Management Plan will be useful to: 1) revising and refining management actions if evaluation shows that desired conditions are not being attained or sustained; and 2) creating a foundation upon which this strategy can eventually be built into a fully-developed, science-based approach to protecting and managing the unique resources of the SRMWF.

The APSLMP requires that each unit management plan provide an environmental and social assessment of area resources and use to determine the area's capacity to withstand increased public use and recreation development.

The Department believes present use levels within the Wild Forest preserve parcels covered by this plan are generally low. The portion of the unit where carrying capacity limits are most likely to reach sustainable limits in the near future are the proposed all terrain bike trail system. With expanded all terrain bike access being proposed in this unit, the Department believes this recreational

use will likely increase. How much of an increase will occur is not easily predictable. Nonetheless, where these trails are proposed, erosion potentials are likely low on gently sloping soils and can tolerate all terrain biking trails, if properly located. Some slopes for short distances are in excess of desired limits. Monitoring will be important, particularly in these areas. LAC standards will be developed for ATB trails. The Department will conduct a yearly internal meeting (and field trip) with Operations, Forest Ranger staff, and appropriate steward groups including Adopt A Natural Resource agreement holders to assess impacts to all all terrain bike trail systems within the unit. Proposals will be made at that time to alleviate overuse problems such as erosion, if they are found to occur. If damage to trails occur and mitigation proposed fails to correct a problem, sections of trails will be closed to all terrain bike use.

Cursory inventories and assessments of biophysical resources, extent of man-made facilities, and current public use indicate this wild forest can withstand higher use levels than currently sustained except in certain sensitive areas. The latter includes the area between the spine of Split Rock Mountain and Lake Champlain, elevated wetlands, riparian areas near Beaver Brook, wet soil areas adjacent to Webb Royce Swamp, and areas severely affected by the Ice Storm of 1998.

The area between the ridge line of the mountain and Lake Champlain is very steep and rugged. Slopes range from a 30% grade (a rise of 30 feet per 100 feet of horizontal distance) to 50-60% on the north end of the mountain. Soils here are thin and highly susceptible to erosion. This area does not afford many environmentally suitable areas for overnight camping and may be best restricted to day use activities. This area is home to many sensitive plant and animal species, most notably the timber rattlesnake and the peregrine falcon. Abundant surface rock would make trail building difficult in this area. Small elevated wetlands and vernal pools fill rock crevasses and the many small cols on the mountain. Seasonally wet soils surrounding Webb Royce Swamp can be easily trampled when the water table is elevated. Extensive areas impacted by the Ice Storm of 1998 have trees with severe top damage and broken branches, and wind throw that make cross-country travel difficult.

A case in point, illustrating the Capacity to Withstand Use, examines the status of many former logging, farming, and mining roads found on the mountain. Roads to the south were originally built for horse use. Despite being more than 100 years old, they remain relatively well-drained, follow natural landscape contours, and have modest grades less than 12%. These need to be considered in developing a trail system for the mountain. In contrast, more recent logging activity with mechanized equipment on the north end of the mountain prior to state ownership has created a haphazard road system in the north. These roads have steep grades, poor drainage, and cross many wet areas. Portions are severely eroded and require extensive rehabilitation, relocation, or outright closure in the context of general recreational use. Most should simply be closed.

The Department is working with the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry on a Visitor Study of Forest Preserve lands. The data collected will focus on both park-wide trends in use and unit level use. The survey will investigate such aspects as seasonality, modality and total level of use of public lands. Data regarding specific units will focus on trends in register sign-ins, programs and resources targeted by users and other specific data to be used in a Limits of Acceptable Change decision-making system. This survey is intended to provide data not only for use in managing facilities and improvements, but also for decision making pertaining to fish and wildlife management practices including programs such as fish stocking. No intensive surveys are planned for the SRMWF, but information obtained from this survey will result in better management of Wild Forest areas in the future. State of the art technology will be combined with traditional methods to inventory the type and extent of actual public use of the areas.

## **F. Working Landscapes - Agricultural Reservations**

The Open Space Institute (OSI) reserved agricultural rights to eight farm fields (197 acres) before transferring title to the State of New York. This agreement is in perpetuity unless farm fields lay fallow for five years or more. These lands were formerly owned by Gary Heurich. The reservations were intended to preserve the working agricultural landscape and open field character of those lands surrounding Split Rock Mountain and Webb Royce Swamp. Four of the eight fields, totaling 74 acres are leased to local farmers and are managed for forage and hay crops. The other four fields, totaling 123 acres, have remained idle for five years with the intent to allow succession to continue to a forested environment. The agricultural leases are administered by the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and Adirondack Land Trust for the Open Space Institute. The agricultural fields are within Essex County's Agricultural District.

## **G. Adjacent Land Uses**

The SRMWF does not exist in a vacuum - what happens outside its boundaries on adjoining private lands can have a profound impact on the unit. Conversely, DEC management of the SRMWF can substantially affect neighboring private lands. Both the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan (APPLUDP) and the APSLMP address activities on both sides of the wild forest boundary in a manner that recognizes different land management goals. The APSLMP by itself does not place any restrictions on private land activities outside or adjacent to state lands. This interrelationship is best illustrated by examining those private lands that lie in close proximity to the SRMWF.

### **1. Adirondack Land Trust/Adirondack Nature Conservancy**

These organizations manage the 246 acre Coon Mountain Preserve one mile west of the SRMWF. It is managed as a nature preserve and is open to public use; however, camping, hunting and trapping are not permitted. There is a parking lot and a one mile hiking trail to the summit of Coon Mountain. It offers outstanding views of the eastern Adirondacks, the Bouquet River Valley, Lake Champlain, and Vermont.

### **2. Eddy Foundation**

The Eddy Foundation owns 1,500 forested acres adjacent to the SRMWF. The land is managed as a nature preserve.

### **3. Agricultural Lands**

There are five active farms west and north of the SRMWF. These lands are devoted to alfalfa, corn, and hay production. Many of the farms contain small blocks of forested land less than 50 acres in size interspersed with farm fields.

The mix of publicly and privately owned lands helps to maintain the area's scenic qualities and preserves open space. The term open space is broadly defined as a landscape that is not intensively developed for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional use (1998 State Open Space Conservation Plan, Page 14). The diversity of forests and fields further supports viable wildlife populations that depend on regional landscapes with adequate habitats for survival.

## **V. SUPPORTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, AND STUDIES**

The SRMWF figures prominently in land use and conservation activities of many organizations and local governments in the Champlain Valley. Its strategic location on Lake Champlain, between the Towns of Essex and Westport, and its unique natural and cultural attributes adds to its importance and its relationship to the management plans and study areas of other organizations. Some of these entities include:

### **Adirondack Nature Conservancy/Adirondack Land Trust**

As discussed in the preceding section, the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and Adirondack Land Trust (ANC/ALT) manage the 246 acres Coon Mountain Preserve, one mile west of Split Rock Mountain. The two organizations work together to protect the working lands and open spaces of New York's 13 northernmost counties. Programs are designed to protect the region's productive forests, agricultural lands and natural areas such as wetlands, shorelines, and areas like Coon Mountain and its adjoining landscape. A primary objective of the ALT Farm and Forest Project is to protect the remaining forested component between Coon and Split Rock Mountains and build a connecting hiking trail.

### **Bouquet River Association**

The Bouquet River Association (BRASS) strives to protect and improve the natural and human environments of the Bouquet River watershed. As a non-profit member-based, volunteer organization, the Bouquet River Association identifies problems, needs and implementation solutions through collaboration with residents and businesses, governments, and the scientific community. "Because the watershed boundary includes Webb Royce Swamp and Split Rock Mountain, the state lands in the area promise much towards the quality of water, habitat, and quality of life in the watershed - BRASS has taken an active interest in the development of the SRMWF. (Ulmer, 2001)

### **Champlain Valley Heritage Network**

The Champlain Valley Heritage Network (CVHN) founded in 1995 focuses its energies on a program of "Countryside Tourism." The CVHN emphasizes multi-modal tourism access for visitors to see, visit, and appreciate the Champlain Valley. The goals of this organization are to stimulate local efforts of the individual community members to derive economic benefits from sustainable tourism and good land stewardship.

### **Champlain Valley Reserve**

The Champlain Valley Reserve is a proposal by the Adirondack Council to protect the valley's agricultural, recreational, and scenic resources as well as its biological diversity through conservation easements and fee title acquisition. The Council recommended that the state acquire more than 8,000 acres in the Valley and more than 11,000 acres, much of it farmland, be protected by conservation easements held by various organizations and land trusts (Adirondack Council, 1988).

## Lake Champlain Basin Program

The Lake Champlain Basin Program was created in 1990 by an act of Congress. The Act provided for creation and staffing of the Lake Champlain Management Conference, which consisted of federal, state, local and private individuals from New York and Vermont who were charged with developing a plan for action to enhance the future of the Lake Champlain Basin. Using funding provided by USEPA, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service the Management Conference addressed issues ranging from regional water and air quality to the enhancement of recreational, historic preservation and tourism opportunities. The Management Conference published its “Opportunities for Action” in 1996 which made a series of recommendations in a variety of program areas. The Department of Environmental Conservation is New York State’s lead agency for Basin Program activities. Since 1996 the leadership for implementation has shifted to a Steering Committee (composed of state officials) and the Technical Advisory Committee, which is composed of scientists and specialists who advise the Steering Committee. Many of the recommended actions in “Opportunities for Action” relate to enhancement of recreational and heritage tourism activities through improved coordination, interpretation and promotion. The Lake Champlain Paddler’s Trail, Lake Champlain Bikeways, a number of historic preservation activities and to an extent Lake Champlain Byways (see below) are products of Basin Program activities.

## Champlain Valley Heritage Corridor Project

The Champlain Valley Heritage Corridor Project is a special resource study undertaken by the National Park Service (NPS) to study the natural and cultural resources of the Champlain Valley to examine the potential for and propose options for the protection, integration, interpretation and promotion of these resources. A team of NPS planners worked in consultation with state and local government officials, citizens, scholars, resource specialists and consultants to evaluate the potential and need for additional NPS involvement and assistance. Concluding that the region contained resources of national significance, the NPS completed its work in 1999 with the issuance of a report that detailed a series of options for congressional consideration ranging from the “no action alternative” through creation of a full scale national heritage corridor. No further action has been taken on this report by the congress but should it progress, it is possible that the SRMWF could play a role as it is centrally located within the study area and contains significant natural and cultural resources.

## The Eddy Foundation

The Eddy Foundation is an adjoining landowner and a not-for-profit foundation located in Westport. The foundation manages 1,500 acres of forested land adjoining the SRMWF along its southern boundary and in the vicinity of the Boquet Mountains. The Foundation’s lands are open to public use for wildlife viewing and hiking. However, camping, hunting, trapping, and fishing are not permitted. The Foundation supports local initiatives in organic farming and land stewardship.

## Lake Champlain Byways

The Lake Champlain Byways is an interstate program created using authority and funding stemming from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Act of 1994 (ISTEA) and continued by



the Surface Transportation Action of 1999 (TEA 21). The program seeks to integrate and coordinate a variety of efforts related to tourism, economic and community development across the region. The program is governed by a Steering Committee composed of county representatives from both states as well as state agency personnel, including the Department.

Lake Champlain Bikeways, Lake Champlain Walkways, the Lake Champlain Paddlers' Trail, and the Lake Champlain Birders Trail are facets of the Lake Champlain Basin Program. Lake Champlain Bikeways is a network of routes for bicyclists that circles Lake Champlain. From principal routes, Bikeways has identified interrelated bike loops that provide access to the smaller communities and roadways bordering the lake on the so-called "Adirondack Coast." The SRMWF is located in these loops. Lake Champlain Walkways is a similar planning effort that proposes a connecting network of trails and roadways that connect the region's communities for pedestrian access. A pilot study includes trails and roads that connect the communities of Essex and Westport. The SRMWF is located halfway between these two villages. A third study group, founded by a not-for-profit advocacy group, has developed the Lake Champlain Paddler's Trail to provide opportunities for canoeists and kayakers to utilize the islands and shoreline of Lake Champlain. The SRMWF has five designated primitive tent sites on the Paddlers' Trail. Another component is the Lake Champlain Birding Trail which is a highway-based trail (approximately 300 miles) which unifies and connects about 60 birding sites along the Lake Champlain shorelines and uplands of New York and Vermont into a cohesive and marketable unit. The Split Rock Mountain area is one of the designated birding areas.

#### Split Rock Wildway

The Wildway is made up of local citizens and a diversity of conservation organizations. Its prime objective is to link the forests of the SRMWF to the Foothills and High Peaks of the Adirondacks. Through state and private land acquisition, the rich biological diversity and wildlife habitat in forests will be restored and protected.

## **VI. ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Issue identification is an important component of the planning process that comes only through active public participation. An issue is defined as a point or question of public discussion or interest that needs to be addressed or decided through the planning process. Issues help identify where DEC needs to focus its management efforts. Public participation was initiated with a public meeting held in Whallonsburg, New York on April 3, 2001. The public meeting for review of the draft plan was held in Westport on December 7, 2004. Press releases in area newspapers were also used to solicit public comment. Numerous interested persons were interviewed to identify issues of concern. DEC, with input from local governments, organizations, and concerned citizens has identified the following planning issues.

### **A. Naturalness**

One of the APSLMP's primary Wild Forest management guidelines is to protect the Wild Forest setting and to provide those types of recreation that will afford public enjoyment without impairing the wild forest atmosphere (APSLMP, June, 2001, Page 32). The following four planning issues were identified:

- ▶ A more comprehensive inventory of ecological conditions is needed to expand DEC's database.
- ▶ Recreation development should not impair the area's Wild Forest character. How can DEC manage this area in a manner that will leave it unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as the region's most important natural area in the Lake Champlain Basin?
- ▶ Motor Vehicle Roads - DEC needs to obliterate all roads used for pre-forest preserve logging that are currently not being used as foot trails.
- ▶ Recreation development should be limited to only trails and parking facilities. To successfully manage this area without natural resource degradation, the minimum tool concept, correct equipment, or structure will be required.

### **B. Cultural Resources**

The SRMWF has many cultural resources that document the early history of Lake Champlain in the Towns of Essex and Westport. Interpretation of these cultural resources helps define the evolution of the landscape encountered at Split Rock Mountain today.

- ▶ Management Impacts: Do we understand how various management activities and recreational uses affect the area's cultural resources?
- ▶ Protection and Preservation: There is a rich cultural history here. How can we better protect area cultural resources from loss due to vandalism, looting, and natural forces?
- ▶ Site Discovery and Definition: How reliable are various inventory techniques and strategies for locating and characterizing cultural resources?
- ▶ Key Historic Research Needs: In what areas is more research needed to help us understand and better manage these resources?

- ▶ Public Interpretation and Education: Do we know what visitors want to learn about this area's past and what interpretation approaches and techniques are most effective?

### **C. Education, Information, and Interpretation**

- ▶ Education and interpretation are methods that connect people and places, influence behavior, and help instill a sense of responsibility and stewardship for wild places.
- ▶ Focus the Message: The SRMWF is a special place. How can we focus this message and appeal to the area's many user groups?
- ▶ Communication Methods: Effective communication requires a variety of media. What are the best ways to convey information to visitors in order to appreciate and care for the SRMWF?

### **D. Recreation Development**

Since acquisition of the SRMWF, there has been very little recreational development due to damage caused by the 1998 Ice Storm and the lack of a unit management plan for the area. Several questions have arisen regarding the future use of the area's many former roads and footpaths as well as places where new trails and parking lots should be constructed. For example:

- ▶ Trail Development: The area has only one formally designated trail. What types of trails and level of development are appropriate for the SRMWF in order to provide a variety of experiences and protect basic resources?
- ▶ Trail Standards: What standards are needed to constrain how various trails are constructed/reconstructed?
- ▶ Parking Lots/ Trailheads: Since this area presently has only one parking area, where and what type of parking lot(s) and trailheads are appropriate for Split Rock Mountain and Webb Royce Swamp?
- ▶ Signing: Except for boundary signs, the area has no signs or trail markers. What level and type of trail marking and signing is needed for people to enjoy the area?

### **E. Protection of Native Flora and Fauna**

The SRMWF is an isolated block of Forest Preserve land adjacent to Lake Champlain that is dominated by a landscape of farms, private woodlots, and small hamlets. It is the home to most Adirondack Wildlife including rare, endangered, and threatened species. The Split Rock Mountain area has many special habitats and Webb Royce Swamp is a regionally significant wetland. Wildlife viewing and enjoyment of nature are important uses of the SRMWF.

- ▶ Protection of the timber rattlesnake and the peregrine falcon in sensitive areas next to Lake Champlain are paramount issues related to trail development: Do managers understand how various management activities and recreational issues affect these and other species?
- ▶ Site discovery and definition: We need to better define the location of sensitive habitats and migration routes. How can this knowledge be expanded and incorporated into unit planning?

- ▶ Research: In what areas is research needed to help us understand and manage native flora and fauna to ensure protection?
- ▶ Public interpretation and education are important issues: Do managers know what visitors want to learn about plants and animals and the best ways to protect them? What and where are best methods and locations to convey this information?

#### **F. Public Information and Education**

Designation of the SRMWF and recent publicity has increased public awareness and interest in this area. As recreation use increases, more inquiries will be received concerning the area's potential for recreation and management. Effective and timely information and education is important to the preservation of cultural and natural values. Signs, trails, brochures, and other educational information help connect people and places. A basic understanding of DEC rules and regulations and minimum impact techniques helps to preserve the area and makes for a better visitor experience. Issues relating to this topic include the lack of any printed information, or maps, or any DEC guide or brochure describing the SRMWF. Also, there are no trail head information kiosks and few signs.

- ▶ How can area information and education be delivered to reach potential visitors before they arrive at the SRMWF, at the trailhead(s) and while in the interior?
- ▶ What is the best format for a map and brochure to help visitors experience the SRMWF?
- ▶ How can area information be coordinated with the efforts of outside groups, organizations, area businesses, and Chambers of Commerce?

## **VII. MANAGEMENT AND POLICY**

### **A. Past Management**

Public use management of the original tract (200 acres), acquired since the late 1800's, consisted of gradual establishment of boundary lines and a long period of minimal custodial management. The remaining parcels were added to Forest Preserve since 1980. The non-designated trail systems in the unit are believed to have received low hiking and cross-country ski use in past years. Depending on snow conditions, from year to year, the designated snowmobile trail in the unit has received low to moderate use by snowmobilers, primarily ice fishermen.

### **Management Guidelines**

#### **1. Guiding Documents**

This unit management plan has been developed within the guidelines set forth by Article XIV of the State Constitution, Article 9 of the Environmental Conservation Law, Parts 190-199 of Title 6 NYCRR of the State of New York, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, and established Department policy.

Article XIV, Section 1 of the State Constitution provides in part that, "The lands of the State, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the Forest Preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed."

The APSLMP provides guidance for the use and management of lands which it classifies as "Wild Forest" by establishing basic guidelines.

This UMP contains Forest Preserve units which fall under the Master Plan classifications of Wild Forest.

"Wild Forest" is defined, in relevant part, on page 32 of the Master Plan, as:

*"an area where the resources permit a somewhat higher degree of human use than in Wilderness, Primitive, or Canoe areas while retaining an essentially wild character. A Wild Forest area is further defined as an area that frequently lacks the sense of remoteness of Wilderness, Primitive or Canoe areas and that permits a wide variety of outdoor recreation."*

Wild Forests are generally less fragile than Wilderness or Primitive areas, and thus, more human impact can be tolerated. The natural resources and natural forest setting must still be protected in a Wild Forest despite the expanded recreational opportunities that can be provided relative to a Wild Forest.

DEC policy has been developed for the public use and administration of Forest Preserve lands. Select policies relevant to the management of this unit include:

- ▶ Administrative Use of Motor Vehicles and Aircraft in the Forest Preserve (CP-17).
- ▶ Motor Vehicle Access to State Lands Under the Jurisdiction of DEC for People with

Disabilities (CP-3).

- ▶ Standards and Procedures for Boundary Line Maintenance (NR-91-2; NR-95-1).
- ▶ Tree Cutting on Forest Preserve Land (O&D #84-06).
- ▶ Cutting and Removal of Trees in the Forest Preserve (LF-91-2).
- ▶ Snowmobile Trails - Forest Preserve (ONR-2).
- ▶ The Administration of Conservation Easements (NR-90-1).
- ▶ Acquisition of Conservation Easements (NR-86-3).
- ▶ Division Regulatory Policy (LF-90-2).
- ▶ Adopt-A-Natural Resource (ONR-1).
- ▶ Policies and Procedures Manual Title 8400 - Public Land Management.

The Department also maintains policy to provide guidelines for the design, location, siting, size, classification, construction, maintenance, reconstruction and/or rehabilitation of dams, fireplaces, fire rings, foot bridges, foot trails, primitive camping sites, road barriers, sanitary facilities and trailheads. Other guidelines used in the administration of Forest Preserve lands are provided through Attorney General Opinions, Department policy memos, and Regional operating procedures.

The recommendations presented in this unit management plan are subject to the requirements of the State Environmental Quality and Review Act of 1975. All proposed management activities will be reviewed and significant environmental impacts and alternatives will be assessed.

It is important to understand that the State Land Master Plan has structured the responsibilities of the Department and the Agency in the management of State lands within the Adirondack Park. Specifically, the APSLMP states that:

"..... the legislature has established a two-tiered structure regarding state lands in the Adirondack Park. The Agency is responsible for long range planning and the establishment of basic policy for state lands in the Park, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Conservation. Via the master plan, the Agency has the authority to establish general guidelines and criteria for the management of state lands, subject, of course, to the approval of the Governor. On the other hand, the Department of Environmental Conservation and other state agencies with respect to the more modest acreage of land under their jurisdictions, have responsibility for the administration and management of these lands in compliance with the guidelines and criteria laid down by the master plan."

In order to put the implementation of the guidelines and criteria set forth in the APSLMP into actual practice, the DEC and APA have jointly signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the implementation of the State Land Master Plan for the Adirondack Park. The document defines the roles and responsibilities of the two agencies, outlines procedures for coordination and communication, defines a process for the revision of the APSLMP, as well as outlines procedures for State land classification, the review of UMPs, state land project management, and state land activity compliance. The MOU also outlines a process for the interpretation of the APSLMP.

## **2. Application of Guidelines and Standards**

### **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Its Influence on Management Actions for Recreation and Related Facilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), along with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title V, Section 504, have had 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. Title II of the ADA applies to the Department and requires, in part, that reasonable modifications must be made to its services and programs, so that when those services and programs are viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. This must be done unless such modification would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the service, program or activity or an undue financial or administrative burden to the Department. Since recreation is an acknowledged public accommodation program of the Department, and there are services and activities associated with that program, the Department has the mandated obligation to comply with the ADA, Title II and ADA Accessibility Guidelines, as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The ADA requires a public entity to thoroughly examine each of its programs and services to determine the level of accessibility provided. The examination involves the identification of all existing programs and services and a formal assessment to determine the degree of accessibility provided to each. The assessment includes the use of the standards established by Federal Department of Justice Rule as delineated by the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG, either adopted or proposed) and/or the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Codes, as appropriate. The development of an inventory of all the recreational facilities or assets supporting the programs and services available on the unit was conducted during the UMP planning process. The assessment established the need for new or upgraded facilities or assets necessary to meet ADA mandates, in compliance with guidelines and criteria set forth in the APSLMP. The Department is not required to make each of its existing facilities and assets accessible. New facilities, assets and accessibility improvements to existing facilities or assets proposed in this UMP are identified in the “Proposed Management Recommendations” section.

### **The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines**

The ADA requires public agencies to employ specific guidelines which ensure that buildings, facilities, programs and vehicles as addressed by the ADA are accessible in terms of architecture and design, transportation and communication to individuals with disabilities. A federal agency known as the Access Board has issued the ADAAG for this purpose. The Department of Justice Rule provides authority to these guidelines.

Currently adopted ADAAG address the built environment: buildings, ramps, sidewalks, rooms within buildings, etc. The Access Board has proposed guidelines to expand ADAAG to cover outdoor developed facilities: trails, camp grounds, picnic areas and beaches. The proposed ADAAG is contained in the September, 1999 Final Report of the Regulatory Negotiation Committee for Outdoor Developed Areas.

ADAAG apply to newly constructed structures and facilities and alterations to existing structures and facilities. Further, it applies to fixed structures or facilities, i.e., those that are attached to the earth or another structure that is attached to the earth. Therefore, when the Department is planning the construction of new recreational facilities, assets that support recreational facilities, or is considering an alteration of existing recreational facilities or the assets supporting them, it must also consider providing access to the facilities or elements for people with disabilities. The standards which exist in ADAAG or are contained in the proposed ADAAG also provide guidance to achieve modifications to trails, picnic areas, campgrounds, campsites and beaches in order to obtain programmatic compliance with the ADA.

#### ADAAG Application

Current and proposed ADAAG will be used in assessing existing facilities or assets to determine compliance to accessibility standards. ADAAG is not intended or designed for this purpose, but using it to establish accessibility levels lends credibility to the assessment result. Management recommendations in each UMP will be proposed in accordance with the ADAAG for the built environment, the proposed ADAAG for outdoor developed areas, the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Codes, and other appropriate guiding documents. Until such time as the proposed ADAAG becomes an adopted rule of the Department of Justice, the Department is required to use the best information available to comply with the ADA; this information includes, among other things, the proposed guidelines

#### Best Management Practices

All trail construction and relocation projects will be developed in accordance with the APSLMP, and will incorporate the use of Best Management Practices, including but not limited to such considerations as:

- ▶ Locating trails to minimize necessary cut and fill
- ▶ Wherever possible, lay out trails on existing old roads or clear or partially cleared areas
- ▶ Locating trails away from streams, wetlands, and unstable slopes wherever possible
- ▶ Use of proper drainage devices such as water bars and broad-based dips
- ▶ Locating trails to minimize grade
- ▶ Using stream crossings with low, stable banks, firm stream bottom and gentle approach slopes
- ▶ Constructing stream crossings at right angles to the stream
- ▶ Limiting stream crossing construction to periods of low or normal flow
- ▶ Using stream bank stabilizing structures made of natural materials such as rock or wooden timbers
- ▶ Using natural materials to blend the structure into the natural surroundings

All construction projects will be developed in accordance with the APSLMP, and will incorporate the use of Best Management Practices, including but not limited to such considerations as:

- ▶ Locating improvements to minimize necessary cut and fill.
- ▶ Locating improvements away from streams, wetlands, and unstable slopes.
- ▶ Use of proper drainage devices such as water bars and broad-based dips.
- ▶ Locating trails to minimize grade.
- ▶ Using stream crossing with low, stable banks, firm stream bottom and gentle approach slopes.



- ▶ Constructing stream crossings at right angles to the stream.
- ▶ Limiting stream crossing construction to periods of low or normal flow.
- ▶ Avoiding areas where habitats of threatened and endangered species are known to exist.
- ▶ Using natural materials to blend the structure into the natural surroundings.

All parking lot construction and relocation projects will incorporate the use of Best Management Practices, including but not limited to such considerations as:

- ▶ Locating parking lots to minimize necessary cut and fill
- ▶ Locating parking lots away from streams, wetlands, and unstable slopes wherever possible
- ▶ Locating parking lots on flat, stable, well-drained sites using gravel for surfacing or other appropriate material to avoid stormwater runoff and erosion
- ▶ Locating parking lots in areas that require a minimum amount of tree cutting
- ▶ Limiting construction to periods of low or normal rainfall
- ▶ Wherever possible, using wooded buffers to screen parking lots from roads
- ▶ Limiting the size of the parking lot to the minimum necessary to address the intended use

All fish stocking projects will be in compliance with the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Fish Species Management Activities of the Department of Environmental Conservation, dated December 1979.

This unit management plan has been designed to serve as the management guidance for the SRMWF for a five-year period following APA review as to its conformity with the APSLMP, public comment, and final approval by the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation. Implementation will commence following approval by the Commissioner.

An interdisciplinary team has developed the following objectives to meet APSLMP criteria and guidelines. All management objectives are designed to help meet the goals of preserving the area's wild forest character while permitting a limited degree of primitive recreation. All planned actions require monitoring to determine their effectiveness in ensuring that the characteristics that define the Wild Forest remain stable or actually improve.

All necessary work in the SRMWF will be accomplished with the minimum tool concept. This action requires that every management action be scrutinized to see first if the action is necessary, then plan to do it with the "minimum tool" to accomplish the task. The chosen tool, equipment, or structure should be the one that least degrades wild forest character temporarily or permanently (High Peaks Plan, 1999).

Future issues, actions, or opportunities will be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine if they are consistent and compatible with the APSLMP and the goals and objectives of this plan. The APSLMP has procedures to amend unit management plans if resource and/or social conditions change during the five-year tenure of each plan.

## **B. Administration and Management Principles**

### **1. Administration**

Several programs within the Department of Environmental Conservation share responsibility for the administration of the SRMWF.

The Division of Lands and Forests manages the Forest Preserve lands. This unit also acquires, maintains and promotes responsible use of public lands.

The Division of Operations is responsible for designing, building and maintaining Department facilities. This unit operates Department campgrounds and maintains facilities such as roads, trails, lean-tos and parking lots.

The Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources protects and manages fish and wildlife species. It also protects and manages habitat and provides for public fishing, hunting and trapping opportunities.

The Division of Water protects water quality in lakes and rivers by monitoring waterbodies and controlling surface runoff.

The Division of Law Enforcement enforces Environmental Conservation laws relating to hunting fishing and trapping; endangered species; possession, transportation and sale of fish and wildlife; and laws relative to environmental quality such as pollution.

The Division of Public Affairs and Education is the public communication link to the public. It promotes citizen participation in the UMP process.

The Division of Forest Protection and Fire Management is responsible for the preservation, protection, and enhancement of the State's forest resources and the safety of the public using the State's resources. Forest Rangers are the stewards of the State lands and are responsible for fire control and search/rescue functions.

### **2. Wild Forest Management Principles**

The following Wild Forest Management Principles are adapted from the principles of Wilderness management presented in Wilderness Management: Stewardship and Protection of Resources and Values, by Hendee and Dawson. They have been modified to apply to the management of Wild Forest lands, consistent with the provisions of Article XIV, Section 1 of the New York State Constitution and the Adirondack and Catskill Park State Land Master Plans.

Manage Wild Forest lands to preserve their wild character while permitting a greater variety of recreational activities and a higher degree of use than are allowed in Wilderness. Those areas classified as Wild Forest are generally less fragile, ecologically, than wilderness and primitive areas. Because the resources of these areas can withstand more human impact, they should accommodate much of the future use of the Forest Preserve. Within constitutional constraints, those types of outdoor recreation that afford enjoyment without destroying the wild forest character or natural resource quality should be encouraged. "Wild forest character" encompasses, among other things, limited evidence of human works, the presence of unspoiled natural settings, and natural processes unhindered by human

interference. Within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, lands classified as Wild Forest are generally less wild than lands classified as Wilderness, Primitive or Canoe Areas, yet still provide some probability of experiencing solitude and a high degree of interaction with the natural environment.

Manage Wild Forest as a composite resource. All the components of the Wild Forest resource—physical, biological, and social—are interrelated, and one management plan must deal comprehensively with those components and their interrelationships. Actions taken for the management of one component must be considered in light of how they will affect other components. Each component must be viewed as a part of the larger whole which is the Forest Preserve resource.

Ensure that the natural and recreational environment of Wild Forest lands will not be degraded. Wild Forest lands will be managed to maintain existing environmental conditions and to restore those areas in which resources have been or are being degraded below minimum levels. Minimum levels will be established in UMPs, which will conform with the guidelines of the Adirondack and Catskill Park State Land Master Plans. Resource conditions will be monitored and evaluated. Management actions will respond to specific areas in which changes in resource conditions exceed acceptable levels specified in the plan, or obvious impacts to resources are occurring.

Protect Wild Forest lands by managing human influences. Wild Forest lands will be managed to provide for a variety of outdoor recreational uses so long as those uses do not degrade the natural resources or wild forest character of the unit to an unacceptable degree. Care will be taken to prevent overuse of areas within the unit, to minimize impacts on natural resources and to preserve the quality of the wild forest recreational experience for visitors, as well as preserve the experience of other users. Each Wild Forest UMP will identify the existing and potential impacts of human activities on the unit and present management actions to address them.

Manage Wild Forest lands for human values and benefits. The Forest Preserve as a whole is valued as a protected landscape, where natural processes operate with minimal human influence, as a wild setting for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, as a symbol of the beauty and power of nature, as a resource for scientific study, and as an economic asset to the Adirondack and Catskill regions. Wild Forest lands will be managed to optimize their value as a setting for a variety of recreational activities within the context of their value as part of a constitutionally protected landscape.

Encourage types of Primitive or unconfined recreation on Wild Forest lands that are not dependent on a wilderness environment. Consistent with their position on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, Wild Forest areas should accommodate those uses, such as regulated snowmobiling, motor boating, float plane use, all-terrain bicycling and group camping, which do not require the more pristine setting of wilderness, to the extent appropriate under the guidelines provided in the Adirondack and Catskill Park State Land Master Plans.

Establish specific management objectives, with public involvement, in a comprehensive written management plan for the unit. Within the constraints of Article XIV, Section 1 of the New York State Constitution and the Adirondack and Catskill Park State Land Master Plans, managers and the public will determine management objectives and actions for each Wild Forest unit in a written UMP, rather than reacting to situations on an ad hoc basis. Resources and the experiences of visitors will be monitored and evaluated for consistency with

objectives as measured against standards set in the plan. Management actions will be adjusted through the planning process, if necessary, to meet stated objectives.

Establish carrying capacities as necessary to prevent unacceptable unnatural change. Recreation should be managed such that impacts to the biological/physical and social/psychological conditions of the unit are kept within acceptable levels as set in the plan. Management should not focus on complete preservation of present resource conditions, but rather on allowing natural processes and change to occur with moderate evidence of human interference. Unnatural change, such as soil compaction at tent sites, should be tolerated, but only up to established limits. The desired level of opportunity for human interaction among people and groups should be set in the plan, so that the social experiences found on the unit does not become closer to that of more developed recreation areas.

Monitor Wild Forest conditions to guide long-term management. Once the carrying capacity of a specific Wild Forest area is established, it is essential that the biological/physical and social/psychological conditions of the area be monitored to track the success of management efforts in achieving carrying capacity objectives over time. The subjects of monitoring efforts should include the direct effects of use as well as the indirect effects of human activity, such as air pollution and the establishment of exotic plants and animals.

Focus management on threatened sites and damaging activities. Allocation of efforts and limited resources must first concentrate on those areas and activities that are having the greatest negative impact on natural resources and visitor experiences.

Use the “minimum tool” necessary to accomplish management objectives. Each management action will be reviewed to determine the minimum action or tool (practices, tools, equipment, regulations) that will be effective in accomplishing the task. Management will seek the approach from available alternatives that will achieve the management objective while having the least possible negative impact on the resources and the experiences of visitors. While the review of alternatives should include cost analysis, the potential degradation of resources will be considered before, and given more weight than, economic efficiency and convenience. When public use must be controlled to prevent resource degradation, education will be the preferred option followed by the minimum degree of regulation or control necessary to meet management needs.

Involve the public in the management of Wild Forest lands. The public will be afforded the opportunity to be directly involved with the process of developing UMPs for Wild Forest lands through comments forwarded directly to DEC and received at public meetings, and when necessary through such means as focus or discussion groups, surveys and other citizen participation techniques. In addition, volunteer efforts will be encouraged as a means by which Wild Forest UMPs will be implemented.

Manage Wild Forest lands in relation to the management of adjacent lands. Wild Forest lands must be viewed as a part of the larger landscape, which includes nearby communities and private lands as well as other public lands. Wild Forest management should be coordinated with the management of adjacent state and private lands in a manner that recognizes differing land management goals. This applies not only to the effects that management actions taken in the Wild Forest unit may have on adjacent lands, but also to the effects that management of adjacent lands may have on the Wild Forest unit and improvements do not impact scenic qualities; and reducing noise impacts of one use upon another. Lands classified as Wild Forest will be managed to allow for uses which do not detract from the natural wild forest character.

This Unit Management Plan is intended to serve as the basic management tool for the SRMWF for a five-year period following APA determination of conformity with the APSLMP, public comment, and approval by the DEC's Commissioner. Implementation will commence following approval by the Commissioner.

An interdisciplinary team has developed the management proposals listed in the next section to meet APSLMP criteria and guidelines. All management objectives are designed to help meet the goals of preserving the area's Wild Forest character while providing a range of acceptable primitive recreation opportunities. All planned actions require monitoring to determine their effectiveness in ensuring that the natural characteristics that define this Wild Forest are protected.

All necessary work in the SRMWF will be accomplished with the *minimum tool concept*. This concept requires that every management action be scrutinized to see first if the action is necessary, then plan to do it with "minimum tool" to accomplish the task. The chosen tool, equipment, or structure should be the one that least degrades wild forest character temporarily or permanently (High Peaks Plan, 1999).

Future issues, actions, or opportunities will be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine if they are consistent and compatible with the APSLMP and the goals and objectives of this plan. The APSLMP has procedures to amend unit management plans if resource and/or social conditions change during the five-year tenure of each plan.

## **VIII. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS**

This section describes specific management proposals, policies, and actions for administering the SRMWF, as well as an overview of current situations and assumptions of future trends in public use. DEC management actions and decisions are guided by Article XIV, Section 1, the "forever wild" clause of the New York State Constitution, the APSLMP and its legislative histories, the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and DEC rules and regulations. The objectives and management actions that follow address issues identified by DEC staff and input received from the public. These are considered the minimum necessary to meet the plan's goals as stated in Section II.

### **A. Bio-Physical Resources**

#### **1. Soils**

Current Situation and Assumptions:

Little information has been collected to document soil loss through human disturbance on trails, overlooks, the Lake Champlain shoreline, and campsites. Soil erosion is occurring on portions of the former road system. The North Rim and Robin's Run Trails have sections needing erosion control. Bank erosions from recreational use is occurring at Barn Rock Bay. Lack of periodic trail maintenance complicates erosion control efforts.

Objectives:

- ▶ Keep soil erosion caused by recreation use within acceptable limits that closely approximates natural erosion.
- ▶ Remediate and stabilize areas that have significant erosion caused by motorized use and pre-forest preserve logging.

#### Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ Prepare a detailed inventory of all trails and former roads to identify areas requiring erosion control.
- ▶ Correct problem areas by rehabilitating the area and/or relocating use to more durable sites.
- ▶ Establish routine maintenance on all designated trails; establish a priority list based on resource needs rather than on the convenience of users.
- ▶ Address erosion on the northern portions of the North Rim and Robin's Run Trails through proper trail maintenance and drainage control.
- ▶ Relocate portions of Robins Run and North Rim trails that have steep grades in excess of 10% to areas with lesser-sustained grades.
- ▶ Request voluntary compliance in seasonal closures of area trails during the spring "mud season" and/or periods of excessive wet weather. This applies to all user groups including hikers and bicyclists.

## **2. Water Resources**

#### Current Situation and Assumptions:

The Split Rock Mountain area has very little water. There are a few streams and a few small scattered wetlands; some are bisected by trails and former logging roads. Some of the former roads have deteriorating non-functional culverts that need to be removed to improve water flow. A drainage ditch was improperly located on state land in Webb Royce Swamp. The alleged violations of the Freshwater Wetlands Act (filling and dredging) on public and private lands were settled by a Consent Order of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, County of Essex in January of 2001. Remediation has been completed and the ditch reconfigured to its original location (APA, 2001). One issue relating to water is the modification of the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site to accommodate fire trucks needing access to the Bouquet River for emergency fill-ups.

#### Objectives:

- ▶ Maintain and improve overall water quality.
- ▶ Maintain free-flowing waters into Webb Royce Swamp.
- ▶ Protect character of Bouquet River (classified recreational at the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site) and maintain water quality.
- ▶ Maintain the presence of native wetland vegetation and habitat.

#### Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ Relocate portions of trails away from wetlands.
- ▶ Activities in or near adjacent wetlands will require consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency.
- ▶ Non-functional culverts shall be cleaned on a regular schedule basis to ensure free flowing water or removed entirely from the unit and replaced with broad based dips, stepping stones or bridging.
- ▶ Rehabilitate lake shore areas that have been impacted by bank erosion caused by recreation use, for example, at Barn Rock Bay.
- ▶ Monitor activities on adjacent lands that have the potential of altering or impeding water flow to Webb Royce Swamp.

- ▶ Re-grade the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site to accommodate the needs of the Essex Fire Department (Project approval dependent on consultations/ agreement with the APA).
- ▶ Make the proposed parking lot at Whallonsburg accessible to persons with disabilities following permit procedures required by the APA and DEC's Bureau of Habitat Protection.
- ▶ See discussion below on invasive wetland plant management.

### **3. Vegetation**

#### **Current Situation and Assumptions:**

Much of the SRMWF's landscape has been altered by agriculture, mining, fire, ice storms, and pre-forest preserve logging. Despite these influences, the unit has retained several unique ecosystems requiring special attention and study. These include areas of rare flora, wetland complexes, mature hemlock forests, and forests that have originated following wild fire, such as the area's Appalachian oak-pine forest. Much of the Open Space Institute's Agricultural Reservation has reverted to shrubs and trees and is no longer suitable for cultivation. Seventy-three acres of the reservation are still maintained as active farm fields.

#### **Objectives:**

- ▶ Allow natural process to operate freely to insure that the succession of native plant communities are not altered by human use.
- ▶ Preserve and protect known locations of sensitive, rare, threatened, and endangered plant species.
- ▶ Promote programs and studies that identify rare ecological communities.
- ▶ Allow the continuation of agriculture on existing cultivated fields as defined in the agricultural reservations.
- ▶ Preserve aquatic and terrestrial habitats of the area.

#### **Management Policies and Actions:**

- ▶ Conduct botanical examinations to produce a more complete natural history inventory and understanding of area ecosystems, such as expanding the New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) and Lake Champlain Committee studies in the unit and surrounding areas.
- ▶ Utilize case studies and management recommendations afforded by NYNHP in managing sensitive areas.
- ▶ Ecological inventories and maps will be correlated with recreation, fish, and wildlife project plans to prevent unintended and undesirable impacts to sensitive areas.
- ▶ Monitor impacts on vegetation from processes such as trail widening and erosion, and from such activities as camping. Allow natural vegetation to revegetate along old woods roads designated for hiking to a narrow width.
- ▶ Seek the elimination of all invasive plants if discovered on the SRMWF. The growth of Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is of immediate concern in Webb Royce Swamp.

## Invasive Plants Proposed Management

### Terrestrial Plants

Prior to implementing targeted containment and/or eradication controls, terrestrial invasive plant infestations occurring within the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest need to be assessed on a site-by-site basis. The geophysical setting and the presence, or absence, of sensitive native flora within or adjacent to the targeted infestation often predicts the Best Management Practices (BMP's) and limitations of the control methodology. Infestations occurring within specific jurisdictional settings may trigger a permitting process, as do most terrestrial infestations occurring within an aquatic setting. The species itself often dictates whether manual management controls, e.g. hand-pulling or cutting, or the judicious, surgical application of herbicides is warranted in order to best control that specific species in that exacting infestation and setting. No single BMP guarantees invasive plant containment or eradication. Many infestations require multiple, seasonal control efforts to reduce the density and biomass at that setting. Adaptive Management protocols suggest that implementation of integrated control methodologies may provide the best over-all efficacy at specific infestations.

The Department will enter into cooperative partnerships through AANR agreements and TRPs to facilitate containment and eradication of the invasive plant occurrences on the unit. Any eradication work involving the use of herbicides will be carried out under an Inter-Agency Work Plan For Management of Terrestrial Invasive Plant Species On State Land in the Adirondack Park (Invasive Plant Work Plan), developed by DEC and APA. This Invasive Plant Work Plan will provide a template for the process through which comprehensive active terrestrial invasive plant management will take place on State lands in the Adirondack Park. The Work Plan will provide protocols for implementing BMP's on State land. The protocols will describe what management practices are acceptable and when they can be implemented, who can be authorized to implement the management practices, and which terrestrial invasive plant species are targeted. The Work Plan also describes a process by which the Department may enter into AANR Agreements with and facilitate individuals or groups seeking to manage terrestrial invasive plant species on State lands using the listed best management practices, including herbicide use, in the appropriate circumstances. The Invasive Plant Work Plan will be subject to SEQRA and serve as the mechanism for assessing the impacts, and suitability of eradication BMPs and actions.

### Terrestrial Plants

Target "easy to contain – low abundance" terrestrial infestations within the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest as immediate targets for containment and/or eradication controls. Minimizing the spread of newly documented and immature infestations before they have the chance to become well-established should be considered a priority management action.

The High Priority terrestrial infestations occurring within Split Rock Wild Forest have been assessed by APIPP.

While Black Swallow-wort is not currently designated a priority invasive plant species by APIPP, these documented infestations represent the only known occurrence of this critical new threat within the Adirondack Park. Shoreline-outcrop and trails within SRMWF afford similar community types for this invasive species to become established. An Early Detection/Rapid Response (ED/RR) protocol for Black Swallow-wort within SRMWF should be considered a High Priority.

APIPP will continue to work collaboratively with the landowners, implementing eradication controls at the documented Black Swallow-wort infestations. The Department will work



collaboratively with APIPP and implement an immediate (2005) ED/RR inventory at SRMWF for Black Swallow-wort. Any positive identification of new infestations within the Unit should then be targeted for immediate eradication controls within the ED/RR field season.

#### Aquatic Invasive Plant Inventory

A variety of monitoring programs collect information directly or indirectly about the distribution of aquatic invasive plants in the Adirondack Park including the NYS DEC, Darrin Fresh Water Institute, Paul Smiths College Watershed Institute, lake associations, and lake managers. In 2001, the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) compiled existing information about the distribution of aquatic invasive plant species in the Adirondack Park and instituted a regional long-term volunteer monitoring program. APIPP trained volunteers in plant identification and reporting techniques to monitor Adirondack waters for the presence of aquatic invasive plant species. APIPP coordinates information exchange among all of the monitoring programs and maintains a database on the current documented distribution of aquatic invasive plants in the Adirondack Park.

Aquatic invasive plant species documented in the Adirondack Park are eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), water chestnut (*Trapa natans*), curlyleaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*), fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*), european frog-bit (*Hydrocharus morsus-ranae*), and yellow floating-heart (*Nymphoides peltata*). Species located in the Park that are monitored for potential invasibility include variable-leaf milfoil (*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*), southern naiad (*Najas guadalupensis*), and brittle naiad (*Najas minor*). Additional species of concern in New York State but not yet detected in the Park are Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*), water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), and brazilian elodea (*Egeria densa*).

Infestations located within and in proximity to a unit may expand and spread to uninfected areas and threaten natural resources within a unit; therefore it is critical to identify infestations located both within and in proximity to a unit to identify high risk areas and prioritize Early Detection Rapid Response (ED/RR) and management efforts.

The SRMWF borders Lake Champlain and affords public access. While a comprehensive survey for the presence of aquatic invasive plant species has not been completed at present, occurrences of Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), Curlyleaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*), Water chestnut (*Trapa natans*), European frog-bit (*Hydrocharus morsus-ranae*), and Yellow floating-heart (*Nymphoides peltata*) are documented in Lake Champlain. All aquatic invasive species pose a risk of spreading via transport mechanisms.

*For species specific information regarding natural history, ecology, and reproduction, please refer to the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England program website*  
<http://webapps.lib.uconn.edu/ipane/search.cfm>.

#### Aquatic Actions

With the exception of Lake Champlain, no aquatic plant occurrences are documented within the Split Rock Wild Forest, therefore there are no management recommendations prescribed at this time. However, ongoing inventory is required to detect new invasive plant occurrences. Lake Champlain should be inventoried for the extent of infestation by aquatic invasive plants and monitored for new occurrences. If aquatic invasive plant infestations occur, rapid response should be implemented by hand-pulling plants via the guidelines set forth by the Adirondack Park Agency's "Advice on the Handharvesting of Nuisance and Invasive Aquatic Plants." Additional methods may be required to manage an infestation to contain, reduce, or eradicate the population. Management will require assessing a set of criteria to evaluate site conditions to determine appropriate and permitted

actions. Because of the number of aquatic invasive species present in Lake Champlain, a rigorous educational campaign, including adequate signage at all launch facilities, should occur to prevent the continued import of aquatic invasive species and their transport to uninfected waters. Furthermore, NYS DEC should collaborate with the Lake Champlain Basin Program and additional partner organizations in the Basin to implement the Lake Champlain Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan.

#### Information Needs

All management recommendations are based on knowledge of nonnative invasive species present in a unit and their location, species, abundance and density. A complete inventory of the unit is necessary to identify aquatic and terrestrial invasive plant threats facing the unit. Inventory should be based on existing inventories, formal or informal inventories during routine operations, and by soliciting help from volunteers to actively study the unit and report on invasive species presence, location, and condition.

Facilities and designated and passive activities within the Unit may influence invasive plant species introduction, establishment, and distribution throughout and beyond the Unit boundaries.

Areas of ingress/egress, whether motorized or non-motorized traffic, of frequently utilized facilities warrants an elevated response to ED/RR inventory for invasive species. These facilities and activities are likely to serve as “hosts” for invasive plant establishment. Perpetual ED/RR protocols should be implemented for probable hosts of invasive plant introduction. These probable hosts include the following:

- Public Day Use Areas
- Campgrounds
- Boat Launches
- Horse Trails and other trails

Protocols to minimize the introduction and transfer of invasive plant species should be incorporated during routine operations and historic and emergency maintenance activities, which may include the following:

#### Construction Projects

- Supplemental to the principals of the Minimum Tools Approach, all soils/straw/seed or sources of materials to be used as stabilization/cover for construction projects within the UMP should be certified as weed-free.

#### Trail Maintenance

- Supplemental to the principals of the Minimum Tools Approach, all soils/straw/seed or sources of materials to be used as stabilization/cover for construction projects within the UMP should be certified as weed-free.

#### Field Sampling

- Personnel performing field sampling should avoid transferring aquatic invasive species between waters by thoroughly inspecting and cleaning equipment between routine operations. Potential pathways include: vehicles, boats, motors, and trailers; sampling equipment; measuring and weighting devices; monitoring equipment; and miscellaneous accessories.

#### Angling Tournaments / Derbies

- Licensing, registration, and/or permitting information distributed by DEC to Tournament or Derby applicants should include guidelines to prevent the introduction and transport of invasive species.

#### Boat Launches and Waterway Access sites

- Through the Invasive Plants Task Force DEC will investigate use of appropriate educational signage at public boat launches and waterway access sites to mitigate or prevent the spread of non-native or invasive plants.

Restoration of sites where invasive plant management occurs is critical to maintain or enhance historical ecological function and structure. Restoration should incorporate best available science to determine effective techniques and the use of appropriate native or non-invasive plant species for site restoration.

Educating natural resource managers, elected officials, and the public is essential to increase awareness about the threat of invasive species and ways to prevent their introduction and transport into or out of the unit. Invasive species education should be incorporated in staff training and citizen licensing programs for hunting, fishing, and boating; through signage, brochures, and identification materials; and included in information centers, campgrounds, community workshops, and press releases.

### **4. Fisheries**

#### Current Situation and Assumptions:

On the whole SRMWF does not support a viable fishery. The area has few streams and little ponded water. Fish communities of Lake Champlain are managed separately. No fisheries activities are proposed for Split Rock Mountain and Webb Royce Swamp.

The Bouquet River, classified recreational under the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Act at the Whallonsburg Access site, has trout fishing opportunities available. This plan proposes construction of a parking lot (including accessibility) to improve opportunities for fishing.

### **5. Wildlife**

#### Current Situation and Assumptions:

The SRMWF hosts a variety of Adirondack wildlife. Since it is the largest block of undeveloped forest land along the west side of Lake Champlain, it provides seclusion, nesting and rearing areas for many species. It is part of a narrow forested belt of state and private lands that serves as a protective corridor for wildlife moving across the Bouquet River Valley between the Adirondack foothills and Lake Champlain. Many species depend on area habitats for nesting, rearing, and survival. There are special habitats supporting bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and timber rattlesnakes. The SRMWF forested components serve as wildlife corridor between the Adirondack foothills and the Lake Champlain Valley. Many visitors come to the SRMWF to observe wildlife along the Lake Champlain shoreline, on Split Rock Mountain, and at Webb Royce Swamp. Others use the area for hunting since it is the only public land in the Towns of Essex and Westport.

As mentioned previously, the SRMWF is one of the few natural areas left along Lake Champlain with little development. Wildlife viewing opportunities, particularly bird life, are excellent.

#### Objectives:

- ▶ Monitor and afford extra protection, if warranted, for species that are endangered, threatened or of special concern that are currently residing in or near the SRMWF. These include the bald eagle, peregrine falcon and timber rattlesnake.
- ▶ Expand DEC's knowledge of the above mentioned species and their habitat requirements
- ▶ Enhance wildlife viewing opportunities.
- ▶ Provide education about wildlife and its needs.
- ▶ Promote wildlife conservation and use.

#### Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ Conduct wildlife population surveys and studies to provide a more complete inventory of all animals inhabiting the SRMWF, when funding allows.
- ▶ Continue to monitor bald eagle, peregrine falcon, and timber rattlesnake populations to gain as much information as possible.
- ▶ Produce information materials and signs to educate and inform rock climbers about nesting peregrine falcon sites on the Palisades; about timber rattlesnakes, and other special wildlife species. Advisory signs will be posted at cliff site areas of peregrine falcons during the nesting season.
- ▶ Avoid any trail or facility development in an area bounded by the South Rocks Overlook, the North Rim Trail, and the northern area of Lewis Clearing Bay since this area contains sensitive wildlife habitats. Place signs on overlooks to advise recreationists to remain on trails to prevent bushwacking between overlooks.
- ▶ Enhance wildlife viewing opportunities at Webb Royce Swamp by providing a suitable parking facility off the Clark Road and a trail to the edge of Webb Royce Swamp. These facilities will be made accessible to persons with disabilities.
- ▶ Continue hunting, trapping, and fishing as legitimate uses of the SRMWF in accordance with the ECL.
- ▶ Advise users of the SRMWF that hunting seasons will be concurrent with other uses of the area including hiking and all terrain biking. Further advise non-hunters to act accordingly and dress safely during these seasons.

#### Water Leveling Device

Many favorable comments were received during the draft phases of this plan on the enhancement of wildlife populations relative to flooded swamp lands at Webb Royce Swamp. In the past, beaver populations played an important role in flooding low lands from construction of their own dams. Beaver populations are cyclic and not always present in this location. In time, their old dams break apart and the swamp reverts to a non-flooded state.

The Department will develop a report on the need and feasibility of constructing a water leveling device on the tributary of Beaver Brook at the outlet end of Webb Royce Swamp. Upon further engineering analysis and consultation with the USFWS Partners in Wildlife Program a water leveling device may be proposed during the interim period (before the next revision) of this UMP and an amendment to the plan proposed. Any proposal for a device is subject to SEQRA review and dependent on consultation and final approval from the APA.

## **B. Land Protection**

### **1. Administration**

#### Current Situation and Assumptions:

A strategy for open space protection, under the conceptual framework of the Open Space Plan (OSP) of 2002, specific to the SRMWF has not been completed. The OSP places a priority on the preservation of Lake Champlain shoreline and associated wetlands. In addition to state acquisition where appropriate, the OSP also recommends the acquisition of conservation easements by local governments, or non-profit organizations; regional and local land use planning initiatives; enrollment in open space tax incentive programs (forestry and agriculture); and wise, informed stewardship by private landowners. Conservation easements on adjacent properties should be acquired to ensure additional natural resource protection and include eventual access easements for Lake Champlain Walkways.

The Adirondack Nature Conservancy/Adirondack Land Trust, the Eddy Foundation, Split Rock Wildway and others would like to conserve additional forested land between the Adirondack foothills and Lake Champlain. A foot trail easement between Coon Mountain and Split Rock Mountain has been endorsed by the aforementioned groups.

Lake Champlain Walkways would like to construct a foot trail across state and private lands connecting the Villages of Essex and Westport to promote tourism.

All SRMWF boundaries have been surveyed over the past 20 years. It is one of the few Adirondack Forest Preserve units that has a complete and up-to-date survey. The unit has 16.0 miles of boundary line that need to be maintained on a regular basis.

#### Objectives:

- ▶ Protect suitable private lands, by fee title acquisition or conservation easement, that adjoin the SRMWF through negotiated sale with willing sellers.
- ▶ Assist local governments, non-profit organizations, etc. in planning and acquisition of conservation easements that help to preserve the SRMWF, promote stewardship of private lands, and increase recreational opportunities.
- ▶ Locate and post all state boundaries on a regular basis.

#### Management Policies and Actions:

Protect private lands that border the SRMWF by fee title acquisition and/or conservation easement under the criteria of the OSP.  
Assist local governments, not for profit organizations, and private citizens in planning, acquiring, and managing conservation easements.  
Maintain all SRMWF boundaries on a scheduled basis. Boundaries will be brushed, signed, and painted every five-six years by completing portions on a yearly basis.

## **C. Cultural Resources**

### **Archaeological Site Protection:**

The historic and archaeological sites located within the SRMWF unit as well as additional unrecorded sites that may exist on the property are protected by the provisions of the New York State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA - Article 14 PRHPL), Article 9 of Environmental Conservation Law, 6 NYCRR Section 190.8 (g) and Section 233 of Education Law. No actions that would impact these resources are proposed in this Unit Management Plan. Should any such actions be proposed in the future they will be reviewed in accordance with the requirements of SHPA. Unauthorized excavation and removal of materials from any of these sites is prohibited by Article 9 of Environmental Conservation Law and Section 233 of Education Law. In some cases additional protection may be afforded these resources by the federal Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA). Submerged cultural resources in waters adjacent to the unit are covered by the above referenced statutes as well as by the federal Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987.

### **Archaeological Research:**

The archaeological sites located on this land unit as well as additional unrecorded sites that may exist on the property will be made available for appropriate research. All future archaeological research to be conducted on the property will be accomplished under the auspices of all appropriate permits. Research permits will be issued only after consultation with the New York State Museum and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Extensive excavations are not contemplated as part of any research program in order to assure that the sites are available to future researchers who are likely to have more advanced tools and techniques as well as different research questions. The Department has facilitated access to the unit for purposes of resource inventory and anticipates continuing to do so.

### **Objectives:**

- ▶ Preserve and protect all sites of known cultural value.
- ▶ Increase DEC's database of the SRMWF cultural resources.
- ▶ Interpret the SRMWF Cultural Resources.

### **Management Policies and Actions:**

- ▶ Support cultural resource field examinations to increase inventories of SRMWF cultural resources.
- ▶ Avoid construction of any new recreation facility that may impair cultural resources.
- ▶ Conserve known cultural resources within the SRMWF through a variety of methods, including non-disclosure of sensitive site locations, public education and on-site protection.
- ▶ Explain the significance of cultural resources through maps and brochures of non-sensitive sites, printed materials, trailhead information kiosks, etc.
- ▶ Combine techniques to make quantitative assessments of such things as group size, length of stay and qualitative assessments of such things as method of travel, types of activities, use distribution, Wild Forest conditions, and visitor perceptions.

## **D. Man- Made Facilities**

The lack of an approved unit management plan for the SRMWF and the Ice Storm of 1998 has limited opportunities for visitors to experience and participate in primitive types of recreation that are permitted by the APSLMP. The following addresses issues relating to recreational demand:

### **1. Trails**

#### **Current Situation and Assumptions:**

With the exception of the one designated snowmobile trail to Lewis Clearing Bay, there are no DEC designated trails. An informal user-created trail system has evolved on area roads now closed to motor vehicle use. Several sections of this informal trail system are poorly located and need rehabilitation and/or relocation. Routine trail maintenance is of primary importance from year to year. There are opportunities to adapt the former road system into a viable trail network by the addition of several small connectors to improve access and diversity. Opportunities to improve access for persons with disabilities have been assessed for Split Rock Mountain and Webb Royce Swamp.

#### **Foot Trails**

#### **Objectives:**

- ▶ Provide and manage a formal trail system (approximately 9.0 miles) that provides a wide range of primitive types of recreation as prescribed by the APSLMP. With the exception of the designated snowmobile trail(1.7 miles), the remaining trails will be classified secondary trails as specified in Appendix Nine.
- ▶ Design and construct new trail segments and relocate portions of the existing network to DEC standards for specific classes of trails as listed in Appendix Nine.
- ▶ Maintain designated trails annually to protect resources, promote visitor safety, and prolong the life of the investment.
- ▶ Incorporate segments of the North End Connector, Robin's Run, Gary's Elbow, Cross-Over, and Calamity Trails into Lake Champlain Walkways for a total distance of 3.8 miles as part of its plan to have a hiking trail between Essex and Westport.

#### **Management Policies and Actions:**

- ▶ Designate, mark, sign, and upgrade the following to DEC secondary trails: Table Three, Section IV.
- ▶ Rehabilitate portions of the Barn Rock Bay, North Rim and Robin's Run Trails to correct erosion and improve drainage.
- ▶ Construct the following connectors and/or new trail segments to improve access and diversity. Refer to Proposed Facilities Map in Appendix Sixteen.
  1. North end connector; Lake Shore Road to its intersection with Robin's Run Trail, 0.4 miles, provides access to the north end of Split Rock Mountain. Also provides a connector for Lake Champlain Walkways to parallel Lake Shore Road. The proposed route partially follows an old farm lane and does not cross regulated wetlands.
  2. Relocate 0.4 miles of the Cross Over Trail away from the Waltz property and connect to the Gary's Elbow Trail. This relocation does not involve regulated wetlands.

3. Extend the North Rim Trail 0.4 miles to afford views of South Rocks, Lake Champlain, and Vermont. No regulated wetlands present.

- ▶ Construct an accessible wildlife viewing trail (0.2 miles) and wildlife viewing platform (12'x16') for persons with disabilities from the Clark Road to the edge of Webb Royce Swamp. The proposed unobtrusive viewing platform would not only allow viewing opportunities but provide individuals a better opportunity to census birds and other wildlife that frequent this unique location. This project will require consultation and final approval with the APA since it involves activities adjacent to regulated wetlands.
- ▶ Prepare a detailed trail inventory and trail plan for all segments. Schedule annual maintenance and solicit volunteer assistance from local organizations and individuals to maintain trails and parking areas.
- ▶ All trails will be marked with DEC trail markers. Open areas will be marked with rock cairns instead of paint. Allow old woods roads designated for hiking opportunities to revegetate to a narrow width.
- ▶ A trailless area (approximately 1,000 acres) will be established in an area roughly bounded by the North Rim Trail, the Lewis Clearing Bay Trail, and the overlook to South Rocks at the north end of Split Rock Mountain. This area is intended to protect the east face of Split Rock Mountain which contains special habitats for endangered and threatened species. No recreation development will occur in this zone except as noted above.

#### All Terrain Bicycle Use

##### Current Situation and Assumptions:

The APSLMP provides that in units classified as Wild Forest, all terrain bicycles may be permitted on roads legally open to the public and on state truck trails, foot trails and snowmobile trails, and horse trails deemed suitable for such use in individual unit management plans (APSLMP, June, 2001, Page 36). The trail system was assessed and evaluated for all terrain bicycle use. Lake Champlain Bikeways has identified additional bicycling opportunities on nearby town and county highways.

##### Objective:

- ▶ Provide opportunities for all terrain bicycles where appropriate in environmentally suitable areas.

##### Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ No specific trails in the unit will be designated primarily for all terrain bike use. The following proposed hiking trails will allow all terrain bike use: North Rim, Robin's Run loop. Total distance is approximately 5.0 miles (See map Appendix Sixteen). This circuit follows old logging roads, but has some sections that need to be relocated and/or rehabilitated for both hiking and all terrain bicycle use. Through initiation of LAC process, trails found to be adversely impacted from bike use will be identified and mitigation will be proposed. If mitigation fails, trails will be closed to all terrain bike use. This trail system designated for all terrain bike use will be maintained to International Mountain Bike Trail Standards, Appendix Ten.



- ▶ Develop LAC standards for ATB trails.
- ▶ Prohibit all terrain bicycle use on the following trails: Barn Rock Bay, Calamity, Cross-Over, Gary's Elbow and a large portion of the Lewis Clearing Bay Trail. Segments of these trails are not suitable for all terrain bicycle due to steepness, seasonally wet soils and sensitive habitats. Also, trail segments to designated overlooks off the main hiking trails will be closed to all terrain bikes and appropriately signed. These trails will be marked with "*No Mountain Biking*" signs.
- ▶ Monitor and evaluate all terrain bicycle use through trailhead registers and an inventory of trail conditions annually.

## Snowmobile Trails

### Current Situation and Assumptions:

A 1.7 mile snowmobile trail was approved and designated in 1992 under the APA/ DEC Memorandum of Understanding to undertake specific projects in areas not having an approved unit management plan. The snowmobile trail is used by ice fishermen, including persons with disabilities, to access Lewis Clearing Bay. Trail use is very light, dependent upon snow and ice conditions, therefore, it is expected that impacts of any kind will remain nonexistent. The present trail is not suitable for mechanical groomers. The trail is currently maintained to an average width of 6 feet atop an old road bed. The trail is used by hikers as well as snowmobilers. Without this trail providing access to this portion of the lake, snowmobilers would be forced to travel several miles from the north or south possibly over unsafe ice conditions.

### Objective:

- ▶ Maintain the existing snowmobile trail(1.7 miles) to Lewis Clearing Bay for use by ice fishermen.

### Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ Maintain the snowmobile trail to a width of eight feet as prescribed in Forest Preserve policy.
- ▶ Monitor and evaluate snowmobile use annually.
- ▶ Review future snowmobile trail proposals under the Comprehensive Snowmobile Plan, once it is adopted.

## 2. Trailheads/Parking Facilities

### Current Situation and Assumptions:

There is only one parking area for the entire SRMWF. It has a capacity of five vehicles and does not adequately serve user needs of the entire area. Off-shoulder parking is not an option because of the narrow width and configuration of Lake Shore Road. There is no safe parking for Webb Royce Swamp. Additional trailheads, accompanied by safe parking are required to complement the proposed trail system mentioned above.

Objective:

- ▶ Provide safe parking for the convenience of visitors and to enhance access.

Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ Construct two additional accessible trailhead parking areas: one off the Lake Shore Road (north side) and one off the Clark Road near Webb Royce Swamp. Capacities will range from five-seven vehicles. Parking details for each proposal are found in Appendix Seven.
- ▶ Construct an accessible five vehicle parking area at the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site in conjunction with approved plans to modify the site by the Town of Essex Fire Department in order to pump water for emergency use from the Bouquet River.
- ▶ All parking facilities will have bike racks including the Westport Boat Launch Site. These locations are located on Lake Champlain Bikeways routes and used as favored stopping points.
- ▶ Maintain all parking facilities on a scheduled basis.
- ▶ In the next revision of this plan, the Department will consider proposing a new parking lot and corresponding trail connector on the south end of the management unit off Lake Shore Road that would provide access to Calamity Trail and other trails in that vicinity. Any proposal to designate a new parking lot will depend primarily on recreational user need.

### **3. Primitive Tent Sites**

Current Situation and Assumptions:

Demand for camping in the SRMWF is very low. Most visitation comes from day users. Split Rock Mountain's rugged terrain, lack of water, and close proximity to Lakeshore Road limit opportunities for primitive camping. Camping next to Lake Champlain is difficult due to steep rocky terrain. Five primitive tent sites have been established on environmentally suitable sites next to the lake. These are located at Barn Rock Bay (2), Ore Bed Bay, the Palisades, and Snake Den Harbor. The sites are included in the Lake Champlain Paddlers' Trail. They consist of a small cleared area, a fire ring, and box-type toilets (only four sites have toilets). The northern most campsite at Lewis Clearing Bay has no toilet and due to steep slope, one will not be recommended here and therefore is proposed to be closed.

Objectives:

- ▶ Provide camping opportunities on environmentally durable sites applicable to APSLMP criteria and guidelines.

Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ Maintain four of the five (close the northern most site north of Lewis Clearing Bay) designated primitive tent sites as mentioned above.
- ▶ Permit camping at other locations in accordance with DEC Rules and Regulations as found in 6NYCRR Section 190.3b. This regulation prohibits camping within 150 feet of any road, trail, spring, stream, pond or other body of water except at camping areas designated by the department.
- ▶ Inventory and monitor primitive tent sites annually to determine resource and social

impacts(See Appendix Eleven). Place register boxes on all primitive campsites along the lake shoreline.

- ▶ Promote Leave-No-Trace skills and ethics in all information and education efforts to reduce impacts from camping.

## **E. Public Use and Access**

### **1. Public Use**

#### **Current Situation and Assumptions:**

DEC has very little information on public use of the SRMWF. Two lakeside trail registers exist for the Lake Champlain Paddler's Trail and one new trail register is located adjacent to the Lake Shore Road to record public use. During the year 2002, 340 individuals were tallied on the Lewis Clearing Bay Trail registry off Lake Shore Road. The year 2003, 775 recreationist signed in at this registry. During 2004, 945 were tallied. Information from the Champlain Committee on campsite use along the lake was lost and never tallied. Other information on public use has been obtained by staff observation, parking lot counts, visitor interviews, and impact assessments of resource conditions. This makes it difficult to judge resource condition trends, i.e. changes over time. Visitor opinions and perceptions alone are inadequate for evaluation purposes.

#### **Objectives:**

- ▶ Obtain better information on the amount and type of human use in the SRMWF.
- ▶ Combine a variety of techniques to inventory human use that provides a baseline for planning and managing recreation use.

#### **Management Policies and Actions:**

- ▶ Install and maintain trailhead registers at all DEC parking facilities. Add registers to campsites along Lake Champlain and make yearly contacts to the Lake Champlain Committee to obtain use numbers.
- ▶ Conduct periodic random compliance checks every other year to determine the number of users who actually register and those who do not.
- ▶ Assess resource conditions annually to determine impacts on trails, scenic overlooks, primitive tent sites.
- ▶ Continue staff contacts with visitors.
- ▶ Combine techniques to make quantitative assessments of such things as group size, length of stay and quantitative assessments of such things as method of travel, types of activities, use distribution, Wild Forest conditions and visitor perceptions.

### **2. Access for Persons with Disabilities**

#### **Current Situation and Assumptions:**

Potential locations to accommodate persons with disabilities were identified in the planning process. Although Split Rock Mountain's steep slopes, sensitive habitats, and rock surfaces limit access opportunities for persons with disabilities, there is the potential to provide greater access to Webb Royce Swamp in conjunction with the Lake Champlain Birding Trail without material modification of the environment.

Objective:

- ▶ Provide the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities consistent with the ADA to the extent that it does not alter the fundamental nature of programs offered to the public or is not excessively expensive.

Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ Make parking accessible for persons with disabilities at the new proposed parking lot for Webb Royce Swamp.
- ▶ Construct a wheelchair accessible trail and wildlife viewing platform for persons with disabilities for wildlife observation purposes. This trail would run 0.1 miles from the proposed parking facility to the edge of Webb Royce Swamp. The wildlife viewing platform will be approximately 12' x 16' and three feet high, similar in design to the one constructed at Ausable Point Wildlife Management Area in 1999. The accessible trail and platform proposals will require consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency for approval since the proposed activities will occur adjacent to a regulated wetlands.
- ▶ Make the proposed Whallonsburg Fishing Parking Access Site accessible.
- ▶ Rehabilitate the boating access site at Westport to accessible standards.
- ▶ If a bridge is not reconstructed over the Bouquet River, adjacent to the Whallonsburg Access Site, the Department will consider placement, if feasible, some form of accessible modified platform along the bank of the river to allow fishing opportunities. Any proposal, if approved in consultation with the APA, would be proposed in a future revision of this UMP.

## **F. Information and Education**

Current Situation and Assumptions:

A comprehensive plan for public information and education has not been developed for the SRMWF. As word of the SRMWF existence spreads and as more people discover its unique natural and cultural attributes, there will be a need and demand for public information. DEC will need to develop an information and education strategy to cope with this demand - both on-site, and at the Regional Office, and in concert with other agencies and interested organizations. Present administrative signing is inadequate. There are no signs in the SRMWF except for boundary line identification signs and signs that close interior roads to motorized use. There is no sign for the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site.

Objectives:

- ▶ Educate visitors about SRMWF special qualities and promote Leave-No-Trace skills and ethics in order to preserve the area and protect its resources.
- ▶ Coordinate information and education efforts with outside groups, organizations, resorts, regional tourism councils, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
- ▶ Encourage visitor compliance with established DEC Rules and Regulations.
- ▶ Limit regulatory and information signs to the minimum necessary to protect specific resources values and promote visitor safety.
- ▶ Provide direction signs at trailheads and trail junctions only.

#### Management Policies and Actions:

- ▶ Install trail registers with regulatory information at the three trailheads: North End, South End, and at Webb Royce Swamp.
- ▶ Develop maps, brochures, and other printed and electronic (website) materials to provide necessary travel information, information on natural and cultural features, and Leave-No-Trace skills and ethics. Develop interpretation on the unique history of the unit at certain trailhead locations.
- ▶ Meet and coordinate delivery of information and education materials through partnerships with outside groups that have an interest in the SRMWF and adjoining areas. This would include the Lake Champlain/Essex County Visitors Bureau, the Champlain Valley Heritage Network, Lake Champlain Byways, Essex and Westport Chambers of Commerce and other interested parties.
- ▶ Develop a comprehensive sign plan for all trailed areas.
- ▶ Trailhead signing will be accessible and will include a standard trailhead sign, directional signs for developed trails, regulatory signs and official information signs pertaining to fire prevention and Leave-No-Trace Skills and Ethics.
- ▶ Advisory signs may be posted to inform visitors of rock climbing closure zones to protect peregrine falcon nesting and rearing periods and areas that are inhabited by eastern timber rattlesnakes.
- ▶ Sign the Whallonsburg Fishing Access

## IX. SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND BUDGET

The management program detailed in Section VII will be implemented through a five year time frame based on available resources. Estimates are based on 2001 labor, equipment, and materials rates. Some activities may be undertaken by volunteers. Schedules may be readjusted if there are significant changes in resource and social conditions.

Any actions to improve the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site will be conducted by the Essex Fire Department pending necessary permit requirements and amended to this plan following APSLMP procedures.

### YEAR ONE

1. Prepare detailed inventory of all trails and former roads to identify areas requiring erosion control.	\$1,000
2. Produce a brochure with a map of the UMP Area.	1,000
3. Upgrade Lewis Clearing Bay Trail (1.7 miles). Install kiosk.	4,000
4. Upgrade Calamity Trail (1.6 miles).	6,000
5. Relocate Cross-Over Trail (0.9 miles).	3,000
6. Construct North End (Lake Shore Road) Parking and Trailhead, includes kiosk/registry.	15,000
7. Post Raptor and Timber Rattlesnake Advisories and signs at overlooks to remain on trails	500
8. Annual maintenance of facilities: blowdown removal, erosion control, litter removal, sign replacement.	5,000
9. Schedule meeting with Operations and Forest Ranger staff to assess impacts to all terrain bike trail systems and conduct annual public use assessment.	2,000
10. Clean or remove non- functional culverts	500
11. Random trailhead registration compliance checks.	250
12. Re- inventory approximately 3.0 miles of existing boundary lines	1,000
13. Contact Lake Champlain Committee for campsite report on lake side campsites	0
14. Rehabilitate the building at the Westport Boat Launch to accessible standards	8,000
15. Initiate exotic plant removal program. Cut/ pull Purple loosestrife and Phragmites in unit specifically Webb Royce Swamp	500
Totals:	\$47,750

## YEAR TWO

1. Upgrade North Rim Trail. Construct connectors to scenic overlooks (3.0 miles).	\$15,000
2. Construct Connector to Robin's Run Trail (0.4).	1,500
3. Upgrade Robin's Run Trail (1.7 miles).	6,000
4. Cut/ pull Purple loosestrife and Phragmites plants in Webb Royce swamp	500
5. Regrade Whallonburg Fishing Access Site to form a parking lot and to accommodate needs of Essex Fire Department.	4,000
6. Annual maintenance of facilities: blowdown removal, erosion control, litter removal, sign replacement.	5,000
7. LAC Inventory (Campsites and Trails)	1,000
8. ADA Inventory of facilities	1,000
9. Schedule meeting with Operations and Forest Ranger staff to assess impacts to all terrain bike trail systems and conduct annual public use assessment	2,000
10. Contact Lake Champlain Committee for campsite report on lake side campsites	0
11. Clean or remove non- functional culverts	500
12. Re- inventory approximately 3.0 miles of existing boundary lines	1,000
Totals:	\$37,500

## YEAR THREE

1. Construct Webb Royce Swamp parking lot. Install kiosk/registry.	\$10,000
2. Construct Universal Access Design Trail to and accessible wildlife viewing platform at Webb Royce Swamp (0.2 mile).	15,000
3. Upgrade Gary's Elbow Trail (0.5 miles).	2,000
4. Upgrade the portion of Barn Rock Bay Trail that needs rehabilitation.	5,000
5. Annual maintenance of facilities: blowdown removal, erosion control, litter removed, sign replacement.	5,000
6. Conduct botanical examinations to improve inventory of Natural Heritage Program.	2,000
7. Schedule meeting with Operations and Forest Ranger staff to assess impacts to all terrain bike trail systems and conduct annual public use assessment.	2,000

8. Random trailhead registration compliance check, contact Lake Champlain Committee for campsite report on lake side campsites	1,000
9. Clean or remove non- functional culverts	500
10. Re- inventory approximately 3.0 miles of existing boundary lines	1,000
11. Install two remaining registries at campsites along Lake Champlain	1,000
12. Develop interpretation (history related) at certain trailhead locations	2,000
Totals:	\$46,500

#### YEAR FOUR

1. Contact Lake Champlain Committee for campsite report on lake side campsites	\$0
2. Upgrade Cross-Over Trail (0.5 miles).	2,000
3. Rehabilitate Lake Champlain Paddlers Trail tentsites (4).	5,000
4. Annual maintenance of facilities: blowdown removal, erosion control, litter removed, sign replacement.	5,000
5. Schedule meeting with Operations and Forest Ranger staff to assess impacts to all terrain bike trail systems and conduct annual public use assessment.	2,000
6. Clean or remove non-functional culverts	500
7. Re- inventory approximately 3.0 miles of existing boundary lines	1,000
Totals:	\$15,500

#### YEAR FIVE

1. Random trailhead registration compliance check, contact Lake Champlain Committee for campsite report on lake side campsites	\$1,000
2. Annual Maintenance of facilities: blowdown removal, erosion control, litter removed, sign replacement.	5,000
3. Split Rock Mountain UMP Brochure Distribution.	500
4. Schedule meeting with Operations and Forest Ranger staff to assess impacts to all terrain bike trail systems and conduct annual public use assessment.	2,000
5. Clean or remove non- functional culverts	500
6. Re- inventory approximately 4.0 miles of existing boundary lines	750
Totals:	\$9,750



## **X. PLAN REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

Any unit management plan for the SRMWF must be sensitive to resource and social change, kept current and relevant. Ordinarily unit management plans are revised every five years after their initial approval (APSLMP, 1987). However, DEC's Region 5 interdisciplinary unit management plan team will conduct yearly reviews and evaluations of the plan. This team will:

- ▶ Document completed actions and adjust the schedule for implementation if necessary.
- ▶ Monitor resource and social conditions through LAC to determine if objectives of the unit management plan and the APSLMP are being met. For example, monitoring will take into account impacts to trails, primitive tent sites, and on wildlife, encounters between user groups, and visitor feedback.
- ▶ Recommend new management actions, revisions, or amendments to the unit plan will adhere to APSLMP criteria and guidelines and be subject to public review.

## **XI. STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT**

The State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) 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.

Unit management plans are considered a "Type I" Action by the SEQRA. A Type I action means an action or class of actions listed in the SEQRA regulations that are more likely to require the preparation of an EIS than unlisted actions (6NYCRR 617.4).

An environmental assessment form (EAF-Appendix Thirteen) was used to identify and analyze relevant areas of environmental concern based on the draft unit management plan's proposed actions. Management activities planned for this unit include: boundary line marking, trail and parking lot construction, fire suppression, search and rescue operations, research activities, patrolling, public information and education, and public use control. This process was used to evaluate the significance of these impacts on the unit.

For example, physical disturbances due to construction of parking areas and trails will be minor, very little vegetation will be cut or disturbed, public safety will be enhanced by providing off-road parking. It is not anticipated that the projects will increase use of the area measurably, but provide safer facilities for users. Based on the information recorded on the EAF, the unit management plan will not result in any large and important impact(s) and, therefore, is one which will not have a significant impact on the environment. A SEQRA Negative Declaration (Appendix Twelve) was prepared to this effect as a supplement to this document and pursuant to 6NYCRR§617.7.

## ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
APA	Adirondack Park Agency
APSLMP	Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan
ATB	All Terrain Bike
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments
CH	County Highway
DEC	Department of Environmental Conservation
EAf	Environmental Assessment Form
ECL	Environmental Conservation Law
EQBA	Environmental Quality Bond Act
LAC	Limits of Acceptable Change
NYNHP	New York Natural Heritage Program
NYCRR	New York Code of Rules and Regulations
NYS	New York State
OSP	Open Space Plan
OSI	Open Space Institute
SEQRA	State Environmental Quality Review Act
SRMWF	Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest
SH	State Highway
TNC/ALT	The Nature Conservancy/Adirondack Land Trust
VERP	Visitor Experience and Resources Protection
WBLS	Westport Boat Launch Site

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## APPENDICES

Appendix One	-	Responsiveness Document
Appendix Two	-	Breeding Bird Atlas Survey
Appendix Three	-	Peregrine / Rattlesnake Advisory
Appendix Four	-	Mammals List
Appendix Five	-	Deer, Bear, Furbearer Harvest Data
Appendix Six	-	Amphibian and Reptile Inventory
Appendix Seven	-	Proposed Parking Lot Construction Details
Appendix Eight	-	Rare Communities and Species
Appendix Nine	-	Trail Classification System- Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest
Appendix Ten	-	Mountain Bike (All Terrain Bike) Trail System Standards & Guidelines
Appendix Eleven	-	Designated Campsite Monitoring Form
Appendix Twelve	-	SEQRA Negative Declaration
Appendix Thirteen	-	SEQRA Full Environmental Assessment Forms
Appendix Fourteen	-	Regulated Wetlands Map
Appendix Fifteen	-	Historic Deer Yard Map
Appendix Sixteen	-	Facilities Map & Additional Maps

## APPENDIX ONE

### DEC Response to Public Comments Received on the Unit Management Plan for the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest

Formal public comments were solicited from the Department on the draft SRMWF UMP between October 3, 2004 and January 10, 2005. The Department held one public meeting at the Westport Central School on December 7, 2004 to present the draft plan and accept public comments. The Department received 19 letters/e-mails, concerning various issues in the plan. In addition, 11 oral comments were received at the public meeting.

#### **Snowmobiling**

Close Lewis Clearing Bay Trail to snowmobiles due to low use.

*The snowmobile trail is proposed to remain open. It has provided access for ice fishermen for many years. Snowmobile use varies from year to year depending on ice cover and snow conditions. Nordic skiing and hiking are likewise activities allowed on this snowmobile trail.*

By allowing snowmobilers the continued use of the 1.7 mile snowmobile trail, this will significantly expand the snowmobile trail mileage above the “no material increase”.

*There is one DEC designated snowmobile trail that extends 1.7 miles from Lake Shore Road to Lewis Clearing Bay. This property was acquired in 1994. The DEC and APA staff consulted per the APA/DEC Memorandum Of Understanding and determined that the trail could remain open.*

#### **Agricultural Fields**

Do not allow pheasant fields to revert back to forested habitat. A 4-5 year rotation is the best alternative!

*Leasing of the fields for agricultural purposes was provided in a deed and was retained by the Open Space Institute. The deed identifies the agreement is in perpetuity unless the farm fields lay idle for five years or more. After five years, idle fields will revert to Forest Preserve.*

Enforce 5- year limit on field rotations so that fields will revert to forest land if left idle.

*The Department is not proposing to change or alter a deed that specifies 5-year limits on field rotations.*

The Department should monitor agricultural run-off in Webb Royce Swamp.

*The Lake Champlain Basin program has had monitoring of approximately 8 major watersheds located on the New York side since the early 1990's. The Webb Royce Swamp is a relatively small watershed compared to the present locations and will not be added to monitoring stations in that program at this time. Further information can be obtained through the Environmental Quality program at the Regional DEC office in Raybrook or the Essex County Soil & Water Conservation District in Elizabethtown.*

Reclassify the agricultural fields in the unit to Intensive Use so that the fields can be reused again if they remain dormant for a few years.

*Reclassification of Forest Preserve lands is the responsibility of the APA. The Department does not believe that a proposal to reclassify these lands as Intensive Use would be in compliance with the APSLMP. The APSLMP states that Intensive Use lands are areas where the state provides facilities for intensive forms of recreation by the public. Further, the APSLMP does not include a land classification category that would allow for continued management of Forest Preserve land for agricultural purposes.*

### **Beaver Brook Tributary**

Place 2 - 4 foot dam on outlet tributary to flood portion of Webb Royce Swamp.

*Many favorable comments were received during the draft phases of this plan on the enhancement of wildlife populations relative to flooded swamp lands at Webb Royce Swamp. In the past, beaver populations played an important role in flooding low lands from construction of their own dams. Beaver populations are cyclic and not always present in this location. In time, their old dams break apart and the swamp reverts to a non-flooded state.*

*The Department will study the need for and feasibility of constructing a water leveling device on the tributary of Beaver Brook at the outlet of Webb Royce Swamp. Additional information can be found on page 55 of the plan.*

### **All terrain biking/ Hiking Trails**

1. Too much mountain biking will cause environmental damage.  
*The Department is proposing to allow all terrain biking (mountain biking) on portions of the hiking trails. If erosion or damage to the hiking trails is observed and mitigation fails to alleviate damage, trails will be closed to bike use.*

There are discrepancies in names of trails on the unit planning maps and the new National Geographic maps series that is available to the public.

*The names identifying trails in the unit management plan are more representative of local established names to date. The Department will recommend that at a future reprinting of the National Geographic maps that the trail names be changed to reflect names identified in the unit management plan.*

Mountain bike trails and hiking trails should be separated within the unit plan.

*The Department posts hiking trails open to mountain biking where the combined use is compatible and where projected use numbers indicate conflicts will be minimal. The DEC is proposing to allow all terrain biking (mountain biking) on approximately 4.5 miles of the 10.7 designated hiking trail miles in the unit. The Department will monitor and evaluate all terrain bicycle use through trailhead registers and an inventory of trail conditions annually. Trails found to be adversely impacted from bike use will be identified and mitigation will be proposed. If mitigation fails the trail will be closed.*

Impacts to hiking trails need to be discussed.

*Hiking trail proposals have been made under the guidelines of the APSLMP in an attempt to balance protection of the natural wild forest setting and improved access to the unit. Furthermore, the APSLMP identifies Wild Forests as appropriate areas to accommodate much of the future use of the Adirondack Forest Preserve. Of course, monitoring is important and it will be conducted to ensure protection of the natural resources and wild forest character of the unit.*

### **Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site**

Place language in plan that specifies platforms on one side bank if no bridge is reconstructed thereby not allowing accessible fishing opportunities.

*Additional language was added to provide consideration for accessibility.*

A map of the location should be included in the plan.

*A map has been included identifying the approximate location of the Forest Preserve parcel.*

### **Wildlife**

Ban beaver trapping in Webb Royce Swamp.

*Beaver populations in New York State are robust and trapping is an essential component of NYSDEC's beaver management program. Beaver are managed to provide the ecological benefits associated with wetland habitats that they create or enhance while balancing the costs and impacts associated with beaver/ human conflicts. Annually, the Department receives about 2,000 beaver problem complaints and trapping is important to keep beaver populations at an acceptable level. Furthermore, trapping is permitted by New York State law (Environmental Conservation Law Article 11, Section 11) and the Department is therefore authorized to adopt regulations to provide trapping opportunity and regulate the manner in which trapping occurs. With the exception of intensive use areas, the Adirondack Forest Preserve is open to public hunting and trapping. The Department is not proposing restrictions on hunting, fishing, or trapping in this unit.*

More up to date and specific information on Rattlesnake signs to be added to the plan.

*Information on signs has been updated.*

Concern over rattlesnakes being hit by mountain bikes on the trail system.

*All terrain bikers presently use portions of the Lake George Wild Forest trail systems. To date there is no documentation of an incident involving bikes colliding with snakes in the trails. However, there is a chance that a bicyclist or hiker will come in contact with a snake on the trail. Through placement of signs educating recreational users, this chance meeting will remain at a minimum.*

The plan does not describe in detail future plans for the Wildway corridor.

*The Department acknowledges the importance of the Wildway program. Habitat connectivity of forests within the park boundaries is very important. Keeping the forest intact prevents habitat loss and fragmentation, thereby maintaining species richness. If properties adjacent to the unit become available for purchase in the future, the Department will give consideration to outright purchase. Additional information on the Split Rock Wildway program has been added to the plan and can be found on page 36.*



## Parking Lots

Too many parking lots proposed in the plan.

*With several miles of road frontage in the planning area, the Department believes that additional small designated parking lots are justified. Instead of four originally, three new parking lots are now proposed for the unit. An improved parking lot, versus a pull-off space, will allow recreationist the opportunity to pull entirely off the road. Liability will be decreased and vehicles are less likely to become stuck.*

## Miscellaneous

Add more Invasive Species information in the plan including maps.

*Invasive Species information has been added to the plan and can be found beginning on page 15. Proposed management can be found on page 50. A map has been included in the appendices.*

The Department should use the resources of the GIS consortium to carry out the task of trail relocation in this and other UMP's.

*Presumably, the above comment relates to the proposed 0.4-mile relocation of a portion of the Cross Over Trail. In at least one other recent UMP, Department staff have worked with GIS staff from SUNY ESF's Adirondack Ecological Center to develop a GIS friction model for use in locating a new trail. However, the use of such a model for such a short trail relocation in the SPMWF is unnecessary and inappropriate, partly because it would not provide a significant time savings over field reconnaissance and the use of GIS data layers beyond their intended scale could result in inaccurate analysis. For the proposed relocation of a portion of the Cross Over Trail, DEC staff used much more appropriate techniques, including a mix of in-the-field reconnaissance and review of existing GIS data layers at appropriate scales.*

DEC must integrate the Minimum Requirements Decision Guide (MRDG) into the UMP.

*The MRDG was designed as a process to identify, analyze, and select management actions that are the minimum necessary for federal wilderness administration. As outlined in the Wild Forest Management Principles included in this UMP, DEC land managers use a similar process, called the minimum tool concept, to scrutinize an action to see first if it is necessary, and then determine the "minimum tool" necessary to accomplish the task.*

DEC is required by the APSLMP to provide an assessment of actual and anticipated use impacts and carrying capacity.

*The UMP does include assessment of the impact of actual and projected public use and assessment of the carrying capacity of the area. Moreover, the Department recognizes that monitoring of resource conditions will be important over the life of the plan and commits to doing so.*

Need for additional trails for people with disabilities.

*The Department is proposing an accessible trail with a viewing platform at Webb Royce Swamp. If there is a demand for additional accessible trails in the future, the Department will look at opportunities for additional trail systems in a future revision of the plan.*

## APPENDIX TWO

### Breeding Bird Atlas

NAME	SCIENTIFIC	BREED CLASS	YEAR	PROTECTNY	SRANK
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	X1	82	Protected-Special Concern	S3S4
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	X1	81	Protected	S5
Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	D2	82	Protected	S5
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	P2	80	Game Species	S5
Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>	NE	81	Game Species	S5
Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	X1	80	Game Species	S3
American Black Duck	<i>Anas rubripes</i>	P2	82	Game Species	S4
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	FL	82	Game Species	S5
Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	FL	82	Game Species	S5
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	FL	80	Game Species	S5
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	X1	84	Protected	S4
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	X1	84	Threatened	S4
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	X1	82	Endangered	S1
Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	FL	81	Threatened	S3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	X1	81	Protected	S4
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	P2	81	Threatened	S4
Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>	X1	80	Protected	S5
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	T2	81	Protected	S5
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	NY	82	Protected	S5
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	P2	84	Endangered	S2
Ring-necked Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	FL	82	Game Species	SE
Ruffed Grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>	FL	80	Game Species	S5
Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	P2	81	Game Species	S5
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	P2	82	Game Species	S5
Virginia Rail	<i>Rallus limicola</i>	FL	82	Game Species	S5
Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>	X1	82	Game Species	S4
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	FL	81	Protected	S5
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularia</i>	P2	82	Protected	S5
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	D2	81	Game Species	S5
American Woodcock	<i>Scolopax minor</i>	NE	81	Game Species	S5
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	FL	82	Unprotected	SE
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Black-billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>	S2	82	Protected	S5
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Eastern Screech-Owl	<i>Otus asio</i>	S2	81	Protected	S5
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Barred Owl	<i>Strix varia</i>	S2	81	Protected	S5
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	X1	81	Protected	S3
Northern Saw-whet Owl	<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>	P2	81	Protected	S3
Whip-poor-will	<i>Caprimulgus vociferus</i>	S2	81	Protected	S4
Chimney Swift	<i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	ON	82	Protected	S5

## APPENDIX TWO

### BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

NAME	SCIENTIFIC	BREED CLASS	YEAR	PROTECTNY	SRANK
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	<i>Archilochus colubris</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Red-headed Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i>	P2	80	Protected	S4
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>	X1	83	Protected	S5
Downy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides pubescens</i>	FY	82	Protected	S5
Hairy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides villosus</i>	D2	81	Protected	S5
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	NY	82	Protected	S5
Pileated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Eastern Wood-Pewee	<i>Contopus virens</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Alder Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax alnorum</i>	X1	81	Protected	S5
Least Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax minimus</i>	S2	81	Protected	S5
Eastern Phoebe	<i>Sayornis phoebe</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Great Crested Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus crinitus</i>	B2	81	Protected	S5
Eastern Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>	NY	82	Protected	S5
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	X1	80	Protected	S5
Purple Martin	<i>Progne subis</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Bank Swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Blue Jay	<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	UN	84	Protected-Special Concern	S4
Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Poecile atricapillus</i>	NY	82	Protected	S5
Red-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>	S2	83	Protected	S5
White-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta carolinensis</i>	FY	82	Protected	S5
Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>	X1	81	Protected	S5
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	X1	81	Protected	S5
Golden-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus satrapa</i>	X1	83	Protected	S5
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>	FY	82	Protected	S5
Eastern Bluebird	<i>Sialia sialis</i>	NY	82	Protected-Special Concern	S5
Veery	<i>Catharus fuscescens</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Wood Thrush	<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>	UN	82	Protected	S5
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	NY	82	Protected	S5
Gray Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	D2	81	Protected	S5
Brown Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma rufum</i>	NY	82	Protected	S5
Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	NY	82	Protected	S5
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	NY	81	Unprotected	SE
Blue-headed Vireo	<i>Vireo solitarius</i>	X1	83	Protected	S5
Warbling Vireo	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>	FY	82	Protected	S5
Red-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Nashville Warbler	<i>Vermivora ruficapilla</i>	S2	82	Protected	S5
Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>	FY	82	Protected	S5

## APPENDIX TWO

### BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

NAME	SCIENTIFIC	BREED CLASS	YEAR	PROTECTNY	SRANK
Chestnut-sided Warbler	<i>Dendroica pensylvanica</i>	FY	80	Protected	S5
Magnolia Warbler	<i>Dendroica magnolia</i>	X1	82	Protected	S5
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Dendroica coronata</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Black-throated Green Warbler	<i>Dendroica virens</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Blackburnian Warbler	<i>Dendroica fusca</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Black-and-white Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>	S2	83	Protected	S5
American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	FY	82	Protected	S5
Ovenbird	<i>Seiurus aurocapillus</i>	NE	83	Protected	S5
Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>	X1	81	Protected	S5
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Canada Warbler	<i>Wilsonia canadensis</i>	P2	81	Protected	S5
Scarlet Tanager	<i>Piranga olivacea</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>	FY	80	Protected	S5
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>	FY	81	Protected	S5
Eastern Towhee	<i>Pipilo erythrophthalmus</i>	DD	81	Protected	S5
Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>	NY	80	Protected	S5
Field Sparrow	<i>Spizella pusilla</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Poocetes gramineus</i>	P2	80	Protected-Special Concern	S5
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	NY	82	Protected	S5
Swamp Sparrow	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>	X1	82	Protected	S5
White-throated Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>	FL	80	Protected	S5
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	T2	82	Protected	S5
Bobolink	<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
Common Grackle	<i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>	FY	82	Protected	S5
Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Baltimore Oriole	<i>Icterus galbula</i>	NY	81	Protected	S5
Purple Finch	<i>Carpodacus purpureus</i>	FL	82	Protected	S5
House Finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	FY	81	Protected	SE
Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	X1	81	Protected	S3
White-winged Crossbill	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>	X1	81	Protected	S2S3
Pine Siskin	<i>Carduelis pinus</i>	S2	82	Protected	S5
American Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis tristis</i>	FY	81	Protected	S5
Evening Grosbeak	<i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i>	X1	81	Protected	S5
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	NY	80	Unprotected	SE

## APPENDIX TWO

### BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

#### Breeding Codes

##### Possible

X                      Species seen in possible nesting habitat or singing male(s) present during mating season.

##### Probable

S                      Singing male present on more than one date in the same place.

P                      Pair observed in suitable habitat in breeding season.

T                      Bird (or pair) apparently holding territory.

D                      Courtship and display, agitated behavior. Includes copulation.

N                      Visiting probable nest site.

B                      Nest building or excavation of a nest hole.

##### Confirmed

DD                    Distraction display or injury feigning.

UN                    Used nest found.

FE                    Egg in oviduct. (For use by bird banders only.)

FL                    Recently fledged young.

ON                    Adult entering or leaving nest site indicating occupied nest.

FS                    Adult carrying fecal sac.

FY                    Adult(s) with food for young.

NE                    Nest building or excavation of a nest hole.

NY                    Nest with young.

## APPENDIX THREE

### Peregrine Advisory Attention Climbers\*

This section of cliff marked in red (refer picture) will be temporarily closed during the period April 1st to August 15 due to the nesting of peregrine falcons. Your cooperation in avoiding this area is appreciated. Disturbance to nesting falcons is a violation of both state and federal law and can result in substantial monetary penalties or even jail.

Please be advised that peregrine falcons may act defensively toward climbers in other areas of this cliff. Be alert for aggressively acting falcons for your health and safety.

For information on other areas which may be temporarily closed, please contact the DEC's Region 5 Bureau of Wildlife (518) 897-1291.

The Department of Environmental Conservation continues to search for new peregrine nest sites. If you know of any new sites, please contact the Bureau of Wildlife at the above listed number or the Endangered Species Unit at (518) 439-7635. Your cooperation is appreciated.

\* To be posted on the Lewis Clearing, Calamity, and Barn Rock Bay Trails

### Suggested Timber Rattlesnake Advisory\* Adapted from Brown. Updated 2004

Timber rattlesnakes (*Crotalus horridus*) are found in this area. The timber rattlesnake is a threatened wildlife species and is fully protected by New York State law. It is illegal to take, shoot, import, possess, transport, or sell a timber rattlesnake in New York (ECL 11-0535)

A timber rattlesnake is not aggressive and will not attempt to escape, but it will strike in self defense. Watch where you sit, step, and place your hands. Do not approach or molest a timber rattlesnake. If you see a timber rattlesnake, stay away from it. If bitten:

1. Stay Calm.
2. Walk slowly out of the woods.
3. Go to the nearest hospital immediately.

\* To be posted at all trailheads and listed in area brochures. Photos of native snakes will also be posted!

## APPENDIX FOUR

### Mammals of the Unit

The SRMWF Unit contains potential habitat for 47 species of mammals. Major species include:

<u>MAMMALS</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Status</u>		
Big Game:				
White Tailed Deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	P	G	R
Black Bear	<i>Ursus americanus</i>	P	G	R
Moose	<i>Alces alces</i>	P	G	Tr
Furbearers:				
Eastern Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>	P	G	R
Bobcat	<i>Lynx rufus</i>	P	G	R
Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>	P	G	R
Muskrat	<i>Ondatra zibethica</i>	P	G	R
Fisher	<i>Martes pennanti</i>	P	G	R
River Otter	<i>Lutra canadensis</i>	P	G	R
Mink	<i>Mustela vison</i>	P	G	R
Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>	P	G	R
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	P	G	R
Gray Fox	<i>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</i>	P	G	Oc
Ermine	<i>Mustela erminea</i>	P	G	Oc
Long-tailed Weasel	<i>Mustela frenata</i>	P	G	Oc
Striped Skunk	<i>Mephitis mephitis</i>	P	G	Oc
Virginia Opossum	<i>Didelphis virginiana</i>	P	G	Oc
Marten	<i>Martes americana</i>	P	G	Oc
Small Game:				
Varying Hare	<i>Lepus americanus</i>	P	G	R
Woodchuck	<i>Mamota monax</i>	Un	Un	Oc
New England Cottontail	<i>Sylvigaus transiionalis</i>	P	G	Oc
Eastern Cottontail	<i>Sylvigaus floridanus</i>	P	G	R
Other:				
Porcupine	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>	Un	Un	R
Chipmunk	<i>Tamias striatus</i>	Un	Un	R
Red Squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus</i>	Un	Un	R
Nn. Flying Squirrel	<i>Glaucomys sabrinus</i>	Un	Un	R
Masked Shrew	<i>Sorex cinereus</i>	Un	Un	R
Water Shrew	<i>Sorex palustris</i>	Un	Un	R
Smokey Shrew	<i>Sorex fumeus</i>	Un	Un	R
Pigmy Shrew	<i>Sorex hoyi</i>	Un	Un	R
Long-tailed Shrew	<i>Sorex dispar</i>	Un	Un	R
Short-tailed Shrew	<i>Sorex brevicauda</i>	Un	Un	R
Hairy-tailed Mole	<i>Parascalops breweri</i>	Un	Un	R
Small Footed Bat	<i>Myotis leibii</i>	SC	P	R
Little Brown Bat	<i>Myotis lucifigus</i>	Un	Un	R

Indiana Bat	<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	E	P	Oc
Eastern Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus subflavus</i>	Un	Un	Oc
Keene's Myotis	<i>Myotis Keeni</i>	P	P	Oc

<u>MAMMALS contd</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Status</u>		
Deer Mouse	<i>Peromyscus maniculatus</i>	Un	Un	R
White-footed Mouse	<i>Peromyscus leucopus</i>	Un	Un	R
Sn. Red-backed Vole	<i>Clethrionomys gapperi</i>	Un	Un	R
Meadow Vole	<i>Micotus pennsylvanicus</i>	Un	Un	R
Rock Vole	<i>Micotus chrotorrhinus</i>	Un	Un	R
Sn. Bog Lemming	<i>Synaptomys cooperi</i>	Un	Un	R
Nn. Bog Lemming	<i>Synaptomys borealis</i>	Un	Un	R
Meadow Jumping Mouse	<i>Zapus hudsonius</i>	Un	Un	R
Woodland Jumping Mouse	<i>Napaeozapus insignis</i>	Un	Un	R

Un = Unprotected	G = Game	R = Resident	Tr = Transient
Oc = Occasional	P = Protected	E = Endangered	SC = Special Concern



APPENDIX FIVE  
Deer, Bear, Furbearer Harvest Data

New York Deer Take by Towns

Year	Essex		Westport		Total	
	Bucks	Total	Bucks	Total	Bucks	Total
<b>2001</b>	14	19	51	70	65	89
<b>2000</b>	28	37	74	96	102	133
<b>1999</b>	19	26	80	108	99	134
<b>1998</b>	49	61	43	72	92	133
<b>Annual Average Take</b>	28	36	62	87	90	122
<b>Percentage of Town in Unit</b>	2%	2%	6%	6%	4%	4%
<b>Estimated Average Annual Take in Unit</b>	0.56	0.72	3.72	5.22	3.6	4.88

New York State Bear Take by Town

Year	Essex	Westport	Total
<b>2001</b>	3	4	7
<b>2000</b>	3	2	5
<b>1999</b>	3	2	5
<b>1998</b>	0	2	2
<b>Average Annual Take</b>	2	3	5
<b>Percentage of Town in Unit</b>	2%	6%	4%
<b>Estimated Annual take in Unit</b>	0	0	0

New York State Furbearer Harvest by Town

<b>Town</b>	<b>2001- 2002</b>	<b>2000- 2001</b>	<b>1999- 2000</b>	<b>1998- 1999</b>	<b>Annual Average</b>
Beaver					
<b>Essex</b>	4	14	30	12	15
<b>Westport</b>	31	15	51	7	26
Otter					
<b>Essex</b>	2	0	1	2	1
<b>Westport</b>	0	0	2	1	1
Fisher					
<b>Essex</b>	0	2	2	2	2
<b>Westport</b>	8	0	18	4	8
Bobcat					
<b>Essex</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Westport</b>	0	2	0	0	1
Coyote					
<b>Essex</b>	4	0	0	0	1
<b>Westport</b>	0	2	0	0	1
Marten					
<b>Essex</b>	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Westport</b>	0	0	0	0	0

## APPENDIX SIX

### Amphibians and Reptiles Inventory

Scientific Name	Common Name	Protected Status (NYS)	Natural Heritage Program Rank
<i>Ambystoma maculatum</i>	Spotted Salamander	Unprotected	S5
<i>Ambystoma laterale</i>	Blue-spotted Salamander	Special Concern	S4
<i>Ambystoma jeffersonianum</i>	Jefferson Salamander	Unprotected- Special Concern	
<i>Ambystoma jeffersonianum x laterale</i>	Jefferson Salamander Complex		
<i>Bufo americanus</i>	American Toad	Unprotected	S5
<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	Mountain Dusky Salamander	Unprotected	S5
<i>Plethodin cinereus</i>	Northern Redback Salamander	Unprotected	S5
<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>	Two-lined Salamander	Unprotected	S5
<i>Gyrinophilus porhyriticus</i>	Northern Spring Salamander	Unprotected	S5
<i>Bufo a. americanus</i>	Eastern American Toad	Unprotected	S5
<i>Hyla versicolor</i>	Gray Treefrog	Unprotected	S5
<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	Red-Spotted Newt	Unprotected	S5
<i>Rana clamitans</i>	Green Frog	Game Species	S5
<i>Rana catesbeiana</i>	Bull Frog	Game Species	S5
<i>Pseudacris triseriata</i>	Western Chorus Frog	Game Species	S5
<i>Rana sylvatica</i>	Wood Frog	Unprotected	S5
<i>Rana septemtrionalis</i>	Mink Frog	Unprotected	S5
<i>Pseudacris crucifer crucifer</i>	Northern Spring Peeper	Unprotected	S5
<i>Rana palustris</i>	Pickerel Frog	Unprotected	S5
<i>Eumeces fasciatus</i>	Five-lined Skink	Unprotected	S5
<i>Caelydra serpentina</i>	Snapping Turtle	Unprotected	S5
<i>Chrysemys picta</i>	Painted Turtle	Unprotected	S5

Scientific Name	Common Name	Protected Status (NYS)	Natural Heritage Program Rank
<i>Diaphis punctatus</i>	Ringneck Snake	Unprotected	S5
<i>Nerodia sipedon</i>	Northern Water Snake	Unprotected	S5
<i>Storeria occipitomaculata</i>	Redbelly Snake	Unprotected	S5
<i>Thamnophis sauritus</i>	Eastern Ribbon Snake	Unprotected	S5
<i>Storeria dekayi</i>	Northern Brown Snake	Unprotected	S5
<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>	Common Garter Snake	Unprotected	S5
<i>Lampropeltis t. triangulum</i>	Eastern Milk Snake	Unprotected	S5
<i>Crotalus horridus</i>	Timber Rattlesnake	Threatened	S3

Communities and rare species are the mapping units or “elements” of the Heritage inventory. Each community and species element is assigned an “element rank” consisting of a combined global and state rank. The global rank reflects the rarity of the element throughout the world and the state rank reflects the rarity within New York State (The Nature Conservancy 1982). Global ranks for communities are not currently standardized by The Nature Conservancy, so the ranks listed in the community descriptions are estimated global ranks.

#### GLOBAL RANKS

- G1 = Critically imperiled throughout its range due to extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences, or very few remaining individuals, acres, or miles of stream) or extremely vulnerable to extinction due to biological factors.
- G2 = Imperiled throughout its range due to rarity (6 - 20 occurrences, or few remaining individuals, acres, or miles of stream) or highly vulnerable to extinction due to biological factors.
- G3 = Either very rare throughout its range (21 - 100 occurrences), with a restricted range (but possibly locally abundant), or vulnerable to extinction due to biological factors.
- G4 = Apparently secure throughout its range (but possibly rare in parts of its range).
- G5 = Demonstrably secure throughout its range (however it may be rare in certain areas).
- GU = Status unknown.

“?” added to the rank indicates uncertainty about the rank.

#### STATE RANKS

- S1 = Typically 5 or fewer occurrences, very few remaining individuals, acres, or miles of stream, or especially vulnerable to extirpation in New York State for other reasons.
- S2 = Typically 6 to 20 occurrences, few remaining individuals, acres, or miles of stream, or very vulnerable to extirpation in New York State for other reasons.
- S3 = Typically 21 to 100 occurrences, limited acreage, or miles of stream in New York State.
- S4 = Apparently secure in New York State.
- S5 = Demonstrably secure in New York State.
- SH = No extant sites known in New York State but it may still exist.
- SU = Status unknown.

“Q” added to the rank indicates a question exists whether or not the taxon is a distinct taxonomic entity.

# APPENDIX SEVEN

## Proposed Parking Lot Construction Details

### Refer to Proposed Facilities Map

#### North End (Lake Shore Road)

Coordinates: N 44° 15' 36.6"  
W 73° 21' 58.1"

Cleared Dimensions: 50' x 40', 2,000 sq. ft.

Capacity 5-7 vehicles

Grade and fill: 50 cubic yds. Coarse gravel subsurface, fines on top

Trees to be removed:

<u>Species</u>	<u># to be removed</u>
Bitternut Hickory (4")	1

Description: Old Farm Field, level. Approx. 100 feet south of intersection with Cross Road. East side of Highway.

#### Webb Royce Swamp (Clark Road)

Coordinates: N 44° 14' 81.3"  
W 73° 22' 98.8"

Cleared Dimensions: 50' x 40', 2,000 sq. ft.

Capacity 5-7 vehicles

Grade and Fill 50 cubic yds. Coarse gravel subsurface, fines on top

Trees to be removed:

<u>Species</u>	<u># to be removed</u>
Bitternut Hickory (4")	1
American elm (3")	1
Big tooth Aspen (6")	1

Description: Old Farm Field, level. Adjoins active farm field, separated by hedgerow.

#### Whallonsburg Access site

Coordinates: N 49° 02' 50.3"  
W 62° 75' 82.0"

Cleared Dimensions: Not determined

Capacity: 5 vehicle

Trees to be removed: 0

## APPENDIX EIGHT

### Rare Communities and Species

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>
<u>Communities</u>			
Red Cedar Rocky Summit		G3, G4	S3
Limestone Woodland		G3, G4	S2, S3
<u>Vascular Plants</u>			
Dwarf sand-cherry (Threatened)	<i>Prunus pumila</i> var. <i>depressa</i>	G5, T5	S2
Veiny meadow-rue (Endangered)	<i>Thalictrum venulosum</i>	G5	S1
Rock-cress (Threatened)	<i>Draba arabisans</i>	G4	S2
Douglas' Knotwood (Threatened)	<i>Polygonum douglasii</i>	G4	S2

## APPENDIX NINE

TRAIL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM - Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest						
TITLE	EXAMPLE	MARKING	TREAD	BARRIERS	USE LEVEL	ACCEPTABLE MAINTENANCE
I. Unmarked Route	No Example	None	Intermittently apparent, Relatively undisturbed organic soil horizon	Natural obstructions present, Logs Water courses	Occasional	None
II. Path	No Example	Intermittent	Intermittently apparent, Compaction of duff, Mineral soils occasionally exposed	Same as unmarked route	Low, varies by location	Intermittent marking with consideration given to appropriate layout based on drainage, Occasional barrier removal only to define appropriate route.
III. Primitive	No Example	Trail markers, Sign at junction with secondary or other upper level trail	Apparent, Soil compaction evident	Limited natural obstructions (logs and river fords)	Low	<u>Drainage</u> : (native materials) where necessary to minimize erosion, <u>Blowdown</u> : removed 2-3 years, <u>Brushing</u> : as necessary to define trail (every 5-10 years), <u>Bridges</u> : only to protect resource (max - 2 log width), <u>Ladders</u> : only to protect exceptionally steep sections, <u>Tread</u> : 14"-18", clear: 3' wide, 3' high.
IV. Secondary	Calamity Trail, Barn Rock Bay, Cross-over Trail, Robins Run, and North Rim	Markers, Signs with basic information	Likely worn and possibly quite eroded. Rocks exposed, Little or no duff remaining	Up to one year's accumulated blowdown, Small streams.	Moderate	<u>Drainage</u> : where needed to halt erosion and limit potential erosion (using native materials), Tread hardening with native materials where drainage proves to be insufficient to control erosion.  <u>Blowdown</u> : annual removal. <u>Brushing</u> : to maintain trail corridor. <u>Bridges</u> : Higher use may warrant greater use of bridges (2-3 logs wide) for resource protection. <u>Ladders</u> : on exceptionally steep rock faces. <u>Tread</u> : 18"-24". Clear 4' wide, 3' High.

## TRAIL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM - Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest

TITLE	EXAMPLE	MARKING	TREAD	BARRIERS	USE LEVEL	ACCEPTABLE MAINTENANCE
V. Trunk Trail or Primary	No Example	Markers, Signed with more information and warnings.	Wider tread, worn and very evident. Rock exposed, Possibly very eroded.	Obstructions only rarely, Small streams	High	<p>Same as above; Plus:</p> <p><u>Blowdown</u>: Regular blowdown removal on designated ski trails, Non-native materials as last resort, Extensive tread hardening when needed,</p> <p><u>Bridge</u>: streams (2-4 logs wide) difficult to cross during high water, Priority given to stream crossings below concentrations of designated camping. Actual turn piking limited to 2% of trail length.</p> <p><u>Tread</u>: 18"-26", clear 6' wide, 8' high,</p>
VI. Front Country	No Example	Heavily marked, Detailed interpretive signing	Groomed	None	Very High	<p>This is to be implemented within 500' of wilderness boundary.</p> <p>Extensive grooming, Some paving, Bark chips, Handicapped accessible.</p>
VII. Horse Trail	No Example	Marked as Trunk or Secondary	Wide tread, Must be rather smooth.	Same as trunk trail.	Moderate to High	<p>Same as trunk trail, except</p> <p>Use techniques appropriate for horses.</p> <p><u>Bridges</u>: 6' minimum width with kick rails, non-native dimensional materials preferred.</p> <p><u>Tread</u>: 2'-4' wide, clear 8' wide, 10' high.</p>
VIII. Ski Trail	No Example	Marked high. Special markers, Sign at all junctions with hiking trails.	Duff remains. Discourage summer use	Practically none due to hazards.	High	<p><u>Drainage</u>: Provide drainage using native materials to protect resource.</p> <p>Focus on removal of obstructions, Maintenance should be low profile,</p> <p><u>Tread</u>: determined by clearing 6' (Should be slightly wider at turns and steep sections.</p>



## TRAIL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM - Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest

TITLE	EXAMPLE	MARKING	TREAD	BARRIERS	USE LEVEL	ACCEPTABLE MAINTENANCE
Snowmobile Trails- Class:						
A	No Example	Marked high	Groomed(width-8 feet, 12 feet on corners)	None	Moderate to High	Blowdown removal(annual) Trail brushing Erosion control structures(Box culverts, etc.) Trail Hardening(corduroy) Bridges Trail Rehabilitation
B	Lewis Clearing Bay Trail	Marked high	Groomed(width- 8 feet)	None	Low to Medium	Blowdown removal(annual) Trail brushing Erosion control structures(Box culverts, etc.) Trail Hardening(corduroy) Bridges Trail Rehabilitation
All Terrain Bike trails (according to International Mountain Biking Standards)	Robins Run, North Rim and Lewis Clearing Bay trails	Marked frequently and No Biking signs posted on adjoining trails not specified for bike use	New trails to maximum of 4 feet. Tread width less than 18 inches on a rolling grade	None	Moderate	Remove vegetation at root level Texture the tread Keep trails below 2000 feet Use existing roads or trails that do not exceed 10 % Blowdown removal(annual) Trail brushing

APPENDIX TEN  
MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL STANDARDS AND GENERAL GUIDELINES  
According to  
International Mountain Biking Association

Look for and identify control points (i.e wetlands, rock outcrops, scenic vistas).  
Avoid sensitive areas; wetlands and wherever water collects.  
Use existing roadways where possible that do not exceed grades of 10%.  
Clear new trails to a maximum width of four feet to establish a single track route.  
Keep tread width less than 18" along a rolling grade.  
Texture the tread - this is the act of placing natural features, such small rocks, logs in the trail to help control speed and retard erosion.  
Remove vegetation at the root level - not at ground level.  
Keep routes close to the contour and avoid fall lines where water is likely to flow downhill.  
On side slopes, following the contour, cut full benches to construct the tread. Outsloping in this manner helps to remove water from the trail. Vegetate backslopes.  
Bench cuts on slide slopes should be cut to a depth of the mineral soil.  
Build flow into the trail with open and flowing designs with broad sweeping turns.  
Streams should be crossed at 90° angles preferably across rock or gravel.  
Bridges may be used where steep banks prevent normal stream crossings. The latter may require an APA Wetlands Permit.  
Do not construct skid berms or extensive banked turns that may accelerate erosion.  
Avoid acute, sharp angle turns.  
Plan trails for beginners to intermediate levels of riders.  
Maintain an overall grade of 10% or less.  
Allow short changes in grade to avoid obstacles.  
Design grade dips to break up long, straight linear sections, and to help divert runoff from the tread.  
Monitor and inspect all trails semi-annually. Address water problems immediately.

**APPENDIX ELEVEN**  
**Designated Campsite Monitoring Form**

**MONITORING FORM A**

1) Old Site Number: \_\_\_\_\_ 1a) New Site Number \_\_\_\_\_

2) Inventoried By: \_\_\_\_\_ 3) Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**INVENTORY PARAMETERS**

- 4) Substrate of site area: (B=bedrock C=cobble S=sand O=soil) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Number of Other Recreational Sites Visible: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Fire Ring Present: (y or n) \_\_\_\_\_  
Construction: (stone or metal) \_\_\_\_\_  
Condition: (1=good, 2=poor, 3=replace) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) Privy Present: (y or n) \_\_\_\_\_  
Condition: (1= good, 2=poor, 3=replace) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Picnic Table Present: (y or n) \_\_\_\_\_  
Condition: (1=good, 2=poor, 3=replace) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) Tree Canopy Cover: (1=0-25%, 2=26-50%, 3=51-75%, 4=76-100%) \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPACT PARAMETERS ( Begin with Site Boundary Determination)**

- 10) Condition Class: (3, 4 or 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) Vegetative Ground Cover Onsite: (Use categories below) \_\_\_\_\_  
(1=0-5%, 2=6-25%, 4=51-75% 5=76-95%, 6=96-100%)
- 12) Vegetative Ground Cover Offsite: (use categories above) \_\_\_\_\_
- 13) Soil exposure: (use categories above) \_\_\_\_\_
- 14) Tree Damage: None/Slight \_\_\_\_\_, Moderate \_\_\_\_\_, Severe \_\_\_\_\_
- 15) Root Exposure: None/Slight \_\_\_\_\_, Moderate \_\_\_\_\_, Severe \_\_\_\_\_
- 16) Number of Tree Stumps: \_\_\_\_\_
- 17) Number of Trails: \_\_\_\_\_
- 18) Number of Fire Sites: \_\_\_\_\_
- 19) Litter/Trash: (N=None, S=Some, M=Much) \_\_\_\_\_
- 20) Human Waste: (N=None, S=Some, M=Much) \_\_\_\_\_
- 21) Comments/Recommendations: \_\_\_\_\_

22) Take Center point and Site Photographs:

Site Center point References

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Satellite Site Dimensions

Island Site Dimensions

Site area from Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
+ Satellite Area \_\_\_\_\_  
- Island Area \_\_\_\_\_  
= Total Site Area \_\_\_\_\_ (sq ft)

Transect Data  
Azimuth Distance (ft)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)
- 9)
- 10)
- 11)
- 12)
- 13)
- 14)
- 15)
- 16)
- 17)
- 18)
- 19)
- 20)
- 21)
- 22)
- 23)
- 24)
- 25)

## MONITORING FORM B

1) Old Site Number: \_\_\_\_\_

1a) New Site Number: \_\_\_\_\_

2) Fire Ring Present: \_\_\_\_\_

Condition: \_\_\_\_\_.

3) Privy Present: \_\_\_\_\_

Condition: \_\_\_\_\_

4) Picnic Table Present: \_\_\_\_\_

Condition: \_\_\_\_\_

5) Condition Class (1 or 2 ) \_\_\_\_\_

Site Size: \_\_\_\_\_ (ft<sup>2</sup>)

## DESIGNATED CAMPSITE MONITORING MANUAL

### DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

For the purpose of this manual, designated campsites are defined as those areas either designated by the Department with a yellow DEC designated campsite marker or shown on an area brochure. In areas with multiple sites there may not always be undisturbed areas separating sites, and an arbitrary decision may be necessary to define separate sites. For each site, monitoring begins with an assessment of Condition Class:

#### CONDITION CLASS DEFINITIONS

- Class 1: Recreation site barely distinguishable; slight loss of vegetation cover and/ or minimal disturbance of organic litter.
- Class 2: Recreation site obvious; vegetation cover lost and/ or organic litter pulverized in primary use area.
- Class 3: Vegetation cover lost and/ or organic litter pulverized on much of the site, some bare soil exposed in primary use areas.
- Class 4: Nearly complete or total loss of vegetation cover and organic litter, bare soil widespread.
- Class 5: Soil erosion obvious, as indicated by exposed tree roots and rocks and/or gullying.

For sites rated Condition Class 1 or 2, complete Form B; for sites rated Class 3, 4 or 5, complete Form A. Form B is an abbreviated version of Form A and greatly reduces the amount of field time. The rationale for this approach is that detailed information on lightly impacted sites is not as critical to management.

During subsequent surveys an attempt should be made to relocate and reassess all sites from the proceeding survey. Former designated sites that have been closed, and are still being used, should be noted as illegal sites. Always note information regarding the history of site use under the comment parameter.

Materials: Compass, peephole or mirror type (not corrected for declination)  
GPS data recorder (GPS point will be taken at each sites center point )  
Tape measure, 100-foot (marked in tenths)  
Flagged wire pins (25 min), one large steel center point stake  
Digital camera  
Clipboard, pencil, field forms, field procedures  
Steel nails ( 5 inch )

#### Form A Procedures

#### Inventory Parameters

1. Site Number: All sites will be assigned an old site number as well as a new site number. Old site numbers will use the existing site numbering system, while new site numbers will be assigned following completion of the mapping of all sites.

2. Inventoried By: List the names of field personnel involved in data collection.

3. Date: Month, day and year the site was evaluated ( e.g., June 12, 1999 = 06/12/99)

4. Substrate of site area: Record the predominant substrate for the area of human disturbance for each site using the coded categories below.

B=bedrock - shelf bedrock

C=cobble - includes gravel size stone and up

S=sand - includes sandy soils that do not form a surface crust in trampled areas

O=soil - includes clays to loamy sands

5. Number of other sites visible: Record the number of other campsites, which if occupied, would be visible from this site.

6. Fire ring : if present or not ( y or n)

a. Construction: stone/ masonry or metal

b. Condition: good=intact, functional for cooking

Poor= missing stones, broken , not functional for cooking but will contain open fire.

7. Privy: if present or not ( y or n )

a. Condition: good= functional, has door, wood not deteriorated( would you use it? )

Poor= nonfunctional, door missing, wood rotten,

8. Picnic table: if present or not ( y or n)

a. Condition: good= usable, no broken boards, table is solid

Poor=not usable, broken/rotten boards, not sturdy

9. Tree canopy cover: Estimate the percentage of tree canopy cover directly over the campsite.

1=0-25%, 2=26-50%, 3=51-75%, 4=76-100%

## Impact Parameters

The first step is to establish the sites boundaries and measure its size. The following procedures describe use of the variable radial transect method for determining the sizes of recreational sites. This is accomplished by measuring the lengths of linear transects from a permanently defined center point to the recreation site boundary.

Step 1. Identify Recreation Site Boundaries and Flag Transect Endpoints. Walk the recreation site boundary and place flagged wire pins at locations which, when connected with straight lines, will define a polygon whose area approximates the recreation site area. Use as few pins as necessary, typical sites can be adequately flagged with 10-15 pins. Look both directions along site boundaries as you place the flags and try to balance areas of the site that fall outside the lines with offsite (undisturbed) areas that fall inside the lines. Pins do not have to be placed on the site boundaries, as demonstrated in the diagram following these procedures. Project site boundaries straight across areas where trails enter the site. Identify site boundaries by pronounced changes in vegetation cover, vegetation height/disturbance, vegetation composition, surface organic litter, and topography. Many sites with dense forest over stories will have very little vegetation and it will be necessary to identify boundaries by examining changes in organic litter, i.e. leaves that are untrampled and intact versus leaves that are pulverized or absent. In defining the site boundaries, be careful to include only those areas that appear to have been disturbed from human trampling. Natural factors such as dense shade and flooding can create areas lacking vegetative cover. Do not include these areas if they appear “natural” to you. When in doubt, it may also be helpful to speculate on which areas typical visitors might use based on factors such as slope or rockiness.

Step 2. Select and Reference Site Center point. Select a site center point that is preferably a) visible from all site boundary pins, b) easily referenced by distinctive permanent features such as larger trees or

boulders, and c) approximately 5 feet from a steel fire ring if present. Embed a 5 inch nail in the soil at the center point location so that the head is 3-4 inches below the surface. During future sight assessments a magnetic pin locator can be used to locate the center point. Next, insert a large steel stake at the center point and reference it to at least three features. Try to select reference features in three opposing directions, as this will enable future workers to triangulate the center point location. For each feature, take a compass azimuth reading and measure the distance ( nearest 1/10 foot) from the center point to the center of trees or the highest point of boulders. Also measure the approximate diameter of reference trees at 4.5 feet above ground (dbh). Be extremely careful in taking these azimuths and measurements, as they are critical to relocating the center point in the future. Record this information on the back of the form.

Take a digital photograph that clearly shows the center point location in relation to nearby trees or other reference features, such as the fire ring, trees or boulders. Record a photo description, such as “center point location site 23 ,” in the photo log.

Options: Some sites may lack the necessary permanent reference features enabling the center point to be accurately relocated. If only one or two permanent reference features are available, use these and take additional photographs from several angles. If permanent features are unavailable, simply proceed with the remaining steps without permanently referencing the center point. This option will introduce more error in comparisons with future measurements, particularly if the site boundaries are not pronounced. Note your actions regarding use of these options in the comment section.

Step 3. Record Transect Azimuths and Lengths. Standing directly over the center point, identify and record the compass bearing(azimuth) of each site boundary pin working in a clockwise direction, starting with the first pin clockwise of north. Be careful not to miss any pins hidden behind vegetation or trees. Be extremely careful in identifying the correct compass bearings to these pins as error in these bearings will bias current and future measurements of site size. Next, anchor the end of your tape to the center point stake, measure and record the length of each transect(nearest 1/10 foot), starting with the same boundary pin and in the same clockwise direction as before. Be absolutely certain that the appropriate pin distances are recorded adjacent to their respective compass bearing.

Step 4. Measure island and satellite areas. Identify any undisturbed islands of vegetation inside the site boundaries ( often due to the clumping of trees and shrubs) and disturbed satellite use areas outside the site boundaries ( often due to tent sites or cooking sites). Use site boundary definitions for determining the boundaries of these areas. Use the geographic figure method to determine the areas of these islands and satellites ( refer to the diagrams following these procedures). This method involves superimposing one or more imaginary geometric figures ( rectangles, circles or right triangles) on island or satellite boundaries and measuring appropriate dimensions to calculate their areas. Record the types of figures used and their dimensions on the back of the form; the size of these areas should be computed in the office using a calculator.

Site Remeasurement: During site remeasurement use the data from the last monitoring period to reestablish the center point and all site boundary pins. If steel nails were embedded in the ground, a magnetic pin locator can assist in this process. Place flagged wire pins at each transect boundary point. Boundary locations based on the following procedures:

Keep the same transect length if that length still seems appropriate, i.e., there is no compelling reason to alter the initial boundary determination.

Record a new transect length if the prior length is inappropriate ,i.e., there is compelling evidence that the present boundary does not coincide with the pin and the pin should be relocated either



closer to or further away from the center point along the prescribed compass bearing. Use different colored flags to distinguish these current boundary points from the former boundaries. Repeat steps 1 and 3 from above to establish additional transects where necessary to accommodate any changes in the shape of recreation site boundaries ( diagram below). Also repeat step 4.

Leave all pins in place until all procedures are completed. Pins identifying the former site boundaries are necessary for tree damage and root exposure assessments.

These additional procedures are designed to eliminate much of the measurement error associated with different individuals making subjective judgements on those sites or portions of sites where boundaries are not pronounced. These procedures may only be used for sites whose center points can be relocated.

<b>Site Number / Site Name</b>										____ / ____									
<b>Compass Bearing:</b>																			
X	0	22	45	67	90	112	135	157	180	202	225	247	270	292	315	337			
X																			
O																			

**Campsite Map:**

10. Condition class: Record the condition class you assessed for the site using the categories described earlier.

11. Vegetative ground cover on site: An estimate of the percentage of live non-woody vegetative ground cover (including herbs, grasses, and mosses and excluding tree seedlings, saplings, and shrubs) within the flagged campsite boundary using the coded categories listed next. Include any disturbed satellite use areas and exclude any undisturbed Island areas of vegetation. For this and the following two parameters, it is often helpful to narrow your decision to two categories and concentrate on the boundary that separates them. For example, if the vegetation cover is either category 2 ( 6-25%) or category 3 ( 26-50%), you can simplify your decision by focusing on whether vegetative cover is greater than 25%.

1=0-5%, 2=6-25%, 3=26-50%, 4=51-75%, 5=76-95%,6=96-100%

12. Vegetative ground cover offsite: An estimate of the percentage of vegetative ground cover in an adjacent but largely undisturbed “control” area. Use the codes and categories listed earlier. The control site should be similar to the campsite in slope, tree canopy cover ( amount of sunlight penetrating to the forest floor), and other environmental conditions. The intent is to locate an area that would closely resemble the campsite area had the site never been used. In instances where you cannot decide between two categories, select the category with less vegetative cover. The rationale for this is simply that, all other factors being equal, the first campers would have selected a site with the least amount of vegetation cover.

13. Soil exposure: An estimate of the percentage of soil exposure, defined as ground with very little or no organic litter (partially decomposed leaf, needle, or twig litter) or vegetation cover, within the campsite boundaries and satellite areas. Dark organic soil, which typically covers lighter colored mineral soil, should be assessed as bare soil. Assessments of soil exposure may be difficult when organic litter becomes highly decomposed and forms a patchwork with areas of bare soil. If patches of organic material are relatively thin and few in number, the entire area should be assessed as bare soil. Otherwise, the patches of organic litter should be mentally combined and excluded from assessments. Code as for vegetative cover.

14. Tree damage: Tally the number of live trees ( > 1 in, diameter at 4.5 ft.) Within the campsite boundaries, including trees in undisturbed islands and excluding trees in satellite areas, into one of the rating classes described below. Assessments are restricted to trees within the flagged campsite boundaries in order to ensure consistency with future measurements. Multiple tree stems from the same species that are joined at or above ground level should be counted as one tree when assessing damage to any of its stems. Assess a cut stem on a multiple-stemmed tree as tree damage, not as a stump. Do not count tree stumps as tree damage. Take into account tree size. For example, damage for a small tree would be considerably less in size than damage for a large tree. Omit scars that are clearly not human-caused (e.g., lightning strikes).

During site remeasurement, begin by assessing tree damage on all trees within the site boundaries identified in the last measurement period. Tally the number of trees in areas where the boundary has moved closer to the center point, i.e., former site areas that are not currently judged to be part of the site separately. Place a box around this number. Next, assess tree damage in areas where boundaries have moved further from the center point, i.e. expanded site areas that are newly impacted since the last measurement period. Circle these tallies. These additional procedures are necessary in order to accurately analyze changes.

None/Slight - No or slight damage such as broken or cut smaller branches, one nail, or a few superficial trunk scars.

Moderate - Numerous small trunk scars and/or nails or one moderate-sized scar.

Severe - Trunk scars numerous with many that are large and have penetrated to the inner wood; any complete girdling of trees ( cut through tree bark all the way around tree).

15. Root exposure: Tally the number of live trees (> 1 in, diameter at 4.5 ft.) Within the campsite boundaries, including trees in undisturbed islands and excluding trees in satellite areas, into one of the rating classes described below. Assessments are restricted to trees within the flagged campsite boundaries in order to ensure consistency with future measurements. Where obvious, omit exposed roots that are clearly not human-caused ( e.g., stream/river flooding).

During site remeasurement, begin by assessing root exposure on all trees within the site boundaries identified in the last measurement period. Tally the number of trees in areas where the boundary has moved closer to the center point, i.e., former site areas that are not currently judged to be part of the site separately. Place a box around this number. Next, assess root exposure in areas where boundaries have moved further from the center point, i.e. expanded site areas that are newly impacted since the last measurement period. Circle these tallies. These additional procedures are necessary in order to accurately analyze changes in root exposure over time.

None/Slight - No or slight root exposure such as is typical in adjacent offsite areas.

Moderate - Top half of many major roots exposed more than one foot from base of tree.

Severe - Three-quarters or more of major roots exposed more than one foot from base of tree; soil erosion obvious.

16. Number of tree stumps: A count of the number of tree stumps (> 1 in. Diameter) within the campsite boundaries. Include trees within undisturbed islands and exclude trees in disturbed satellite areas. Do not include cut stems from a multiple-stemmed tree.

During site remeasurement, begin by assessing stumps on all trees within the site boundaries identified in the last measurement period. Tally the number of trees in areas where the boundary has moved closer to the center point, i.e., former site areas that are not currently judged to be part of the site separately. Place a box around this number. Next, assess stumps in areas where boundaries have moved further from the center point, i.e. expanded site areas that are newly impacted since the last measurement period. Circle these tallies. These additional procedures are necessary in order to accurately analyze changes in stumps over time.

17. Number of trails: A count of all trails leading away from the outer campsite boundaries. Do not count extremely faint trails that have untrampled tall herbs present in their tread or trails leading out to any satellite sites.

18. Number of fire sites: A count of each fire site within campsite boundaries, including satellite areas. Include old inactive fire sites as exhibited by blackened rocks, charcoal, or ashes. Do not include areas where ashes or charcoal have been dumped. However, if it is not clear whether or not a fire was built on the site, always count questionable sites that are within site boundaries and exclude those that are outside site boundaries.

19. Litter/trash: Evaluate the amount of litter/trash on the site: n=None or less than a handful, S=some-a handful up to enough to fill a 2-1/2-gallon bucket, M=Much- more than a 2-1/2-gallon bucket.

20. Human waste: Follow all trails connected to the site to conduct a quick search of likely “toilet” areas, typically areas just out of sight of the campsite. Count the number of individual human waste sites, defined as separate locations exhibiting toilet paper and/or human feces. The intent is to identify the extent to which improperly disposed human feces is a problem. Use the following code categories: N=None, S=Some-1-3 sites, M=Much-4 or more sites evident.

21. Comments/Recommendations: An informal list of comments concerning the site: note any assessments you felt were particularly difficult or subjective, problems with monitoring procedures or their application to this particular campsite, or any other comment.

22. Campsite photograph: Select a good vantage point for viewing the entire campsite, preferably one of the site boundary pins, and take a digital picture of the campsite. Note the azimuth and distance from the center point to the photo point and record on the form. The intent is to obtain a photograph that includes as much of the site as possible to provide a photographic record of site condition. The photo will also allow future workers to make a positive identification of the site. Label disks with date, and site number.

23. Total campsite area: Calculate the campsite area based on the recorded transect measurements. Add the area of any satellite sites and subtract the area of any undisturbed islands to obtain the Total Campsite Area. Record campsite area to nearest square foot (ft<sup>2</sup>).

#### Form B Procedures

Refer to the procedures described earlier, all procedures are the same with the exception of campsite size. Measure campsite size using the geometric figure method. Typically, class 1 and 2 campsites are quite small in size and this method should be both efficient and accurate. Be sure to record on form B the types of figures used ( rectangle, square, triangles...etc.) And all necessary dimensions. Record campsite area to nearest square foot (ft<sup>2</sup>).

APPENDIX TWELVE  
SEQR-Negative Declaration  
14-12-7 (2/87)-9c

State Environmental Quality Review  
NEGATIVE DECLARATION  
Notice of Determination of Non-Significance  
Identifying # \_\_\_\_\_

Project Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date February 8, 2005

This notice is issued pursuant to Part 617 of the implementing regulations pertaining to Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act) of the Environmental Conservation Law.

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation as lead agency, has determined that the proposed action described below will not have a significant effect on the environment and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Name of Action: Adoption and Implementation of the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest Unit Management Plan

SEQR Status:      Type 1      x    
                         Unlisted         

Conditioned Negative Declaration:        Yes  
     x   No

Description of Action:

Adopt a comprehensive unit management plan addressing the use of and preservation of public lands. Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act (Executive Law) requires the Department of Environmental Conservation to develop in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency, individual unit management plans for each unit under its jurisdiction classified in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

Actions include boundary line marking, new trail construction, including trails for hiking and all terrain bicycle use, trail upgrades and relocations, parking lot and trail head construction, parking lot improvements, construction of an accessible wildlife viewing trail and platform for persons with disabilities, improvement of facilities, search and rescue operations, maintenance of existing facilities, including, blowdown removal, erosion control, litter removal, and sign replacement, public information and education and public use controls.

Location: (Include street address and the name of the municipality/county. A location map of appropriate scale is also recommended.)

Adirondack Forest Preserve, Towns of Essex and Westport, Essex County

**Reasons Supporting This Determination:**

(See 617.7(c) for requirements of this determination; see 617.7(d) for Conditioned Negative Declaration)

All management actions will comply with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, Department policies, the Environmental Conservation Law, rules and regulations, and guidelines and will be consistent with Article XIV of the New York State Constitution.

Physical disturbances due to construction of trails and parking lots will be minor. Public safety will be enhanced by providing safe-off road parking facilities. It is not anticipated that this project will increase the use of the area measurably, but rather provide safer facilities for current users. Tree cutting will be in compliance with the Commissioner's Delegation Memorandum on Tree Cutting in the Forest Preserve, #91-2. Trails may be closed during wet seasons if other action to minimize impacts cannot prevent damage.

Trail construction will incorporate the use of best management practices, including, but not limited to the following:

- Locating trails to minimize necessary cut and fill;
- Wherever possible, lay out trails on existing old roads or cleared or partially cleared areas;
- Locating trails away from streams, wetlands, and unstable slopes, wherever possible;
- Use of proper drainage devices such as water bars and broad-based dips, or crowning;
- Locating trails to minimize grade;
- Using natural materials to blend the structure into the natural surroundings.

### Hiking Trails

The designation of approximately 9.0 miles of existing trails on former logging roads that are proposed in this plan will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. The existing snowmobile trail (1.7 miles) in the unit is also used by hikers. Segments of the North End Connector, Robin's Run, Gary's Elbow, Crossover, and Calamity Trails will be incorporated into Lake Champlain walkways for a total distance of 3.8 miles to have a hiking trail between Essex and Westport. Connectors and/or new trail segments will be constructed to improve access and diversity.

Trails will be established on stable soils engineered to grades less than 10%, whenever possible, dependent upon topographic constraints. Limited vegetative removal will be required for proposed new trail segments.

Since the hiking trails will be established on existing trails with the exception of certain trail relocation and extensions there will be minimal removal of vegetation or physical disturbance of the resource. The APA wetland permitting process will ensure that there will be no significant impacts to wetlands resulting from trail management

and maintenance activities. Relocation and extension of trail segments are not extensive in length, totaling less than 2 miles, and will be located to:

Minimize necessary cut and fill; and  
Avoid trees, streams, and wetlands.

Also relocation and trail extensions will also avoid steep grades and poor soils to avoid erosion. As necessary, proper drainage devices such as water bars and broad-based dips will be employed to avoid erosion. Designated trails will be maintained annually to protect resources and promote visitor safety.

#### Posting of Signs

The plan proposes posting of various informational signs. Sign posting will have no adverse impacts to the resource given the nonintrusive and minimal nature of this activity.

#### All Terrain Bicycle Trails

Since the trails proposed follow old logging roads they have the capacity to withstand the use of bicycles as well as foot traffic. By assessing the carrying capacity of the trails based on grade, soils and sensitive habitat, the plan appropriately designates recreational uses for trails and avoids impacts associated with the various uses.

Approximately 9.0 miles of hiking trail will be designated. Approximately 5.0 miles of hiking trail will be designated for all terrain bicycle use. These will be proposed as single-narrow track trails on stable soils with grades less than 10% where possible. Grades will exceed 10 percent in some trail sections for short distances. All terrain bike use will be allowed on the following trail systems: a small segment of the Lewis Clearing Bay Trail, the North Rim, Robin's Run trails and the short segment of proposed hiking trail from Lake Shore Road to the northern section of Robin's Run.

All terrain bicycle use will be monitored and evaluated through trailhead registrations and an inventory of trail conditions annually. Trails that are adversely impacted from bicycle use will be identified and appropriate actions will be taken. If the measures taken are not successful, sections of trails will be closed.

#### Snowmobile Trail

Currently 1.7 miles of a designated snowmobile trail (Lewis Clearing Bay) currently exists in the unit and is extensively used by hikers, also. The proposed maintenance of this trail will not have any adverse environmental impacts, since it will not involve any changes or trail construction. Snowmobile use will be monitored annually. Appropriate action will be taken if adverse impacts occur.

#### Trailheads/Parking Facilities

The plan also proposes to construct 2 accessible trailhead parking areas within the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest. Capacities will range between five to seven vehicles. An additional accessible five car parking lot is proposed at the Whallonsburg Fishing Access site. The Whallonsburg parking site will be made accessible to persons

with disabilities. Additional parking capacity is proposed to meet current and future needs and to provide safe parking. Proposed parking lot locations were chosen on the basis of terrain and minimal need for excavation and tree cutting and safe distances from approaching traffic.

Since the proposed parking areas will be relatively small and increase vehicle parking by a maximum of 19 spaces, increased usage will be small, especially since the additional parking capacity is proposed to meet current needs and provide safe parking.

All parking area construction will employ the following best management practices to ensure that the activity will have no significant impacts on the environment:

- Locating parking areas to minimize necessary cut and fill;
- Locating parking areas away from streams, wetlands, and unstable slopes;
- Locating parking areas on flat, stable, well-drained sites;
- Locating parking areas in areas that require a minimum amount of tree cutting;
- Limiting construction to periods of low or normal rainfall;
- Wherever possible, using wooded buffers to screen parking lots from roads;
- Limiting the size of the parking lot to the minimum necessary to address the intended use; and
- Surfacing parking areas with gravel to avoid surface water runoff and erosion.

#### Wildlife Viewing Trail and Platform

Construction of 0.2 of a mile of trail and wildlife viewing platform (12'x16') for persons with disabilities will be constructed from Clark Road to the edge of Webb Royce Swamp. Since the site is located in a field, construction will only require some mowing and brushing. A packed surface of fine, screened gravel may be used over the existing soil. Material to bind the fine gravel may be applied to stabilize the surface and meet current accessibility guidelines.

Potential impacts of the proposed actions will be minimized since resource conditions will be assessed annually to determine impacts on trails, scenic overlooks, and primitive tent sites and quantitative assessments of group size, length of stay as well as method of travel, type of activities, use distribution, Wild Forest conditions, and visitor perceptions will be made. Appropriate action will be taken if adverse impacts occur.



If Conditioned Negative Declaration, provide on attachment the specific mitigation measures imposed.

For Further Information:

Contact Person: Stewart Brown

Address: NYS DEC  
PO Box 220  
232 Hudson Street  
Warrensburg, New York 12885

Telephone Number: (518) 623-1246

For Type 1 Actions and Conditioned Negative Declarations, a Copy of this Notice Sent to:

Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation, 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233-1010

Appropriate Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Conservation

Office of the Chief Executive Officer of the political subdivision in which the action will be principally located.

Applicant (if any)

Other involved agencies (if any)

# APPENDIX THIRTEEN

## State Environmental Quality Review

### FULL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM

Purpose: The full EAF is designed to help applicants and agencies determine, in an orderly manner, whether a project or action may be significant. The question of whether an action may be significant is not always easy to answer. Frequently, there are aspects of a project that are subjective or unmeasurable. It is also understood that those who determine significance may have little or no formal knowledge of the environment or may not be technically expert in environmental analysis. In addition, many who have knowledge in one particular area may not be aware of the broader concerns affecting the question of significance.

The full EAF is intended to provide a method whereby applicants and agencies can be assured that the determination process has been orderly, comprehensive in nature, yet flexible enough to allow introduction of information to fit a project or action.

Full EAF Components: The full EAF is comprised of three parts:

- Part 1: Provides objective data and information about a given project and its site. By identifying basic project data, it assists a reviewer in the analysis that takes place in Parts 2 and 3.
- Part 2: Focuses on identifying the range of possible impacts that may occur from a project or action. It provides guidance as to whether an impact is likely to be considered small to moderate or whether it is a potentially-large impact. The form also identifies whether an impact can be mitigated or reduced.
- Part 3: If any impact in Part 2 is identified as potentially-large, then Part 3 is used to evaluate whether or not the impact is actually important.

#### DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE -- Type 1 and Unlisted Actions

Identify the Portions of EAF completed for this project: ☒ Part 1 ☒ Part 2 ☐ Part 3

Upon review of the information recorded on this EAF (Parts 1 and 2 and 3 if appropriate), and any other supporting information, and considering both the magnitude and importance of each impact, it is reasonably determined by the lead agency that:

- ☒ A. The project will not result in any large and important impact(s) and, therefore, is one which will not have a significant impact on the environment, therefore a negative declaration will be prepared.
- ☐ B. Although the project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect for this Unlisted Action because the mitigation measures described in PART 3 have been required, therefore a CONDITIONED negative declaration will be prepared.\*
- ☐ C. The project may result in one or more large and important impacts that may have a significant impact on the environment, therefore a positive declaration will be prepared.

\*A Conditioned Negative Declaration is only valid for Unlisted Actions

#### Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest

Name of Action

**NYS Department of Environmental Conservation**

Name of Lead Agency

**Tom Martin**

**Regional Forester**

Print or Type Name of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency

Title of Responsible Officer

**Peter Frank for Tom Martin /s/**

Signature of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency

Signature of Preparer (If different from responsible officer)

**February 8, 2005**

Date

PART 1--PROJECT INFORMATION  
Prepared by Project Sponsor

NOTICE: This document is designed to assist in determining whether the action proposed may have a significant effect on the environment. Please complete the entire form, Parts A through E. Answers to these questions will be considered as part of the application for approval and may be subject to further verification and public review. Provide any additional information you believe will be needed to complete Parts 2 and 3.

It is expected that completion of the full EAF will be dependent on information currently available and will not involve new studies, research or investigation. If information requiring such additional work is unavailable, so indicate and specify each instance.

NAME OF ACTION <b>Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest</b>		
LOCATION OF ACTION (INCLUDE STREET ADDRESS, MUNICIPALITY AND COUNTY) <b>Towns of Essex and Westport, Essex County</b>		
NAME OF APPLICANT/SPONSOR <b>NYS Department of Environmental Conservation</b>		BUSINESS TELEPHONE <b>(518) 897-1200</b>
ADDRESS <b>Rt. 86, P.O. Box 296</b>		
CITY/PO <b>Ray Brook</b>	STATE <b>NY</b>	ZIP CODE <b>12977</b>
NAME OF OWNER (IF DIFFERENT)		BUSINESS TELEPHONE <b>( )</b>
ADDRESS		
CITY/PO	STATE	ZIP CODE
DESCRIPTION OF ACTION <b>Comprehensive unit management plan, proposing boundary line marking, trailhead parking lot construction, hiking and all terrain biking trail development, fire suppression, search and rescue operations, maintenance of existing facilities, public information and education and public use controls.</b>		

Please Complete Each Question--Indicate N.A. if not applicable

### A. SITE DESCRIPTION

Physical setting of overall project, both developed and undeveloped areas.

1. Present Land ☐ Urban ☐ Industrial ☐ Commercial ☐ Residential (suburban) ☐ Rural (non-farm)  
Use: ☒ Forest ☐ Agriculture ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Total acreage of project area: 3,984 acres.

	PRESENTLY	AFTER COMPLETION
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE		
Meadow or Brushland (Non-agricultural)	<u>123</u> acres	<u>123</u> acres
Forested	<u>3495</u> acres	<u>3493</u> acres
Agricultural (Includes orchards, cropland, pasture, etc.)	<u>74</u> acres	<u>74</u> acres
Wetland(Freshwater or tidal as per Articles 24,25 of ECL)	<u>252</u> acres	<u>252</u> acres
Water Surface Area	_____ acres	_____ acres
Unvegetated (Rock, earth or fill)	<u>40</u> acres	<u>40</u> acres
Roads, buildings and other paved surfaces	_____ acres	_____ acres
Other (Indicate type) <b>parking lot and trail construction</b>	<u>0</u> acres	<u>2</u> acres
  
3. What is predominant soil type(s) on project site? **Canaan Rock Outcrop, Amenia Nellis, Vergennes Kingsbury**
  - a. Soil drainage: ☒ Well drained 30 % of site ☒ Moderately well drained 50 % of site.

☒ Poorly drained 20 % of site

b. If any agricultural land is involved, how many acres of soil are classified within soil group 1 through 4 of the NYS Land Classification System? \_\_\_\_\_ Acres (see 1NYCRR 370).

4. Are there bedrock outcroppings on project site? ☒ YES ☐ NO  
a. What is depth to bedrock? (in feet) 0-8 feet
5. Approximate percentage of proposed project site with slopes: ☒ 0-10% 30 % ☒ 10-15% 40 %  
☒ 15% or greater 30 %
6. Is project substantially contiguous to, or contain a building, site, or district, listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places? ☒ YES ☐ NO
7. Is project substantially contiguous to a site listed on the Register of National Natural Landmarks? ☐ YES ☒ NO
8. What is the depth of the water table? 1-20 feet (in feet)
9. Is site located over a primary, principal, or sole source aquifer? ☐ YES ☒ NO
10. Do hunting, fishing or shell fishing opportunities presently exist in the project area? ☒ YES ☐ NO
11. Does project site contain any species of plant or animal life that is identified as threatened or endangered?  
According to: NYNHP  
Identify each species: Northern Harrier(Circus cyaneus), Peregrine Falcon(Falco peregrinus), Timber Rattlesnake(Crotalus horridus), Douglas Knotweed(Polygonum douglasii), Dwarf sand-cherry(Prunus pumila var depressa), Rock Cress(Draba arabisans), Veiny meadow-rue(Thalictrum venulosum)
12. Are there any unique or unusual land forms on the project site? (i.e., cliffs, dunes, other geological formations?) ☒ YES ☐ NO  
Describe: Cliffs, Lake Champlain Palisades
13. Is the project site presently used by the community or neighborhood as an open space or recreation area? ☒ YES ☐ NO  
If yes, explain: hiking, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, and swimming
14. Does the present site include scenic views known to be important to the community? ☒ YES ☐ NO
15. Streams within or contiguous to project area: Beaver Brook  
a. Name of Stream and name of River to which it is tributary Bouquet River
16. Lakes, ponds, wetland areas within or contiguous to project area:  
a. Name: Webb Royce Swamp  
b. Size (in acres): 250
17. Is the site served by existing public utilities? ☐ YES ☒ NO  
a. If YES, does sufficient capacity exist to allow connection? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
b. If YES, will improvements be necessary to allow connection? ☐ YES ☐ NO
18. Is the site located in an agricultural district certified pursuant to Agriculture and Markets Law, Article 25-AA, Section 303 and 304? ☒ YES ☐ NO
19. Is the site located in or substantially contiguous to a Critical Environmental Area designated pursuant to Article 8 of the ECL, and 6 NYCRR 617? ☐ YES ☒ NO
20. Has the site ever been used for the disposal of solid or hazardous wastes? ☐ YES ☒ NO

## B. Project Description

1. Physical dimensions and scale of project (fill in dimensions as appropriate).

- a. Total contiguous acreage owned or controlled by project sponsor 0 acres.
- b. Project acreage to be developed: 2 acres initially; 2 acres ultimately.
- c. Project acreage to remain undeveloped 3858 acres.

d. Length of project, in miles: N/A (if appropriate)

e. If the project is an expansion, indicate percent of expansion proposed N/A %

f. Number of off-street parking spaces existing 5; proposed 15-19

g. Maximum vehicular trips generated per hour N/A (upon completion of project)?

h. If residential: Number and type of housing units:

	One Family	Two Family	Multiple Family	Condominium
Initially	<u>N/A</u>			
Ultimately				

i. Dimensions (in feet) of largest proposed structure \_\_\_\_\_ height; 40 width; 50 length.

j. Linear feet of frontage along a public thoroughfare project will occupy is? N/A ft.

2. How much natural material (i.e. rock, earth, etc.) will be removed from the site? 0 tons/cubic yards.

3. Will disturbed areas be reclaimed? ☐ N/A ☐ YES ☐ NO

a. If yes, for what intended purpose is the site being reclaimed? \_\_\_\_\_

b. Will topsoil be stockpiled for reclamation? ☐ YES ☒ NO

c. Will upper subsoil be stockpiled for reclamation? ☐ YES ☒ NO

4. How many acres of vegetation (trees, shrubs, ground covers) will be removed from site? 2 acres.

5. Will any mature forest (over 100 years old) or other locally-important vegetation be removed by this project? ☐ YES ☒ NO

6. If single phase project: Anticipated period of construction \_\_\_\_\_ months, (including demolition)

7. If multi-phased:

a. Total number of phases anticipated 5 (number)

b. Anticipated date of commencement phase 1 March month 2005 year, (including demolition)

c. Approximate completion date of final phase September month 2010 year.

d. Is phase 1 functionally dependent on subsequent phases? ☐ YES ☒ NO

8. Will blasting occur during construction? ☐ YES ☒ NO

9. Number of jobs generated: during construction N/A; after project is complete \_\_\_\_\_

10. Number of jobs eliminated by this project N/A

11. Will project require relocation of any projects or facilities? ☐ YES ☒ NO

If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Is surface liquid waste disposal involved? ☐ YES ☒ NO

a. If yes, indicate type of waste (sewage, industrial, etc) and amount \_\_\_\_\_

b. Name of water body into which effluent will be discharged \_\_\_\_\_

13. Is subsurface liquid waste disposal involved? Type \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ YES ☒ NO

14. Will surface area of an existing water body increase or decrease by proposal? ☐ YES ☒ NO

If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Is project or any portion of project located in a 100 year flood plain? ☐ YES ☒ NO

16. Will the project generate solid waste? ☐ YES ☒ NO

a. If yes, what is the amount per month \_\_\_\_\_ tons

b. If yes, will an existing solid waste facility be used? ☐ YES ☐ NO

c. If yes, give name \_\_\_\_\_; location \_\_\_\_\_

d. Will any wastes not go into a sewage disposal system or into a sanitary landfill? ☐ YES ☐ NO

e. If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

17. Will the project involve the disposal of solid waste? ☐ YES ☒ NO

a. If yes, what is the anticipated rate of disposal? \_\_\_\_\_ tons/month.

b. If yes, what is the anticipated site life? \_\_\_\_\_ years.

18. Will project use herbicides or pesticides? ☐ YES ☒ NO
19. Will project routinely produce odors (more than one hour per day)? ☐ YES ☒ NO
20. Will project produce operating noise exceeding the local ambient noise levels? ☐ YES ☒ NO
21. Will project result in an increase in energy use?  
If yes, indicate type(s) \_\_\_\_\_
22. If water supply is from wells, indicate pumping capacity N/A gallons/minute.
23. Total anticipated water usage per day N/A gallons/day.
24. Does project involve Local, State or Federal funding? ☒ YES ☐ NO
- If yes, explain: State funding
25. Approvals Required:

				TYPE	SUBMITTAL DATE
City, Town, Village Board	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO			
City, Town, Village Planning Board	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO			
City, Town Zoning Board	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO			
City, County Health Department	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO			
Other Local Agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO			
Other Regional Agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO			
State Agencies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO		<b>Adirondack Park Agency</b>	
Federal Agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO			

### C. Zoning and Planning Information

1. Does proposed action involve a planning or zoning decision? ☒ YES ☐ NO
- If Yes, indicate decision required:  
☐ Zoning amendment ☐ Zoning variance ☐ New/revision of master plan ☐ Subdivision  
☐ Site plan ☐ Special use permit ☒ Resource management plan ☒ Other Adirondack Park SLMP
2. What is the zoning classification(s) of the site? Wild Forest
3. What is the maximum potential development of the site if developed as permitted by the present zoning?  
N/A
4. What is the proposed zoning of the site? N/A
5. What is the maximum potential development of the site if developed as permitted by the proposed zoning?  
N/A
6. Is the proposed action consistent with the recommended uses in adopted local land use plans? ☒ YES ☐ NO
7. What are the predominant land use(s) and zoning classifications within a ¼ mile radius of proposed action?  
**Resource Management and Rural Use,**
8. Is the proposed action compatible with adjoining/surrounding land uses with a ¼ mile? ☒ YES ☐ NO
9. If the proposed action is the subdivision of land, how many lots are proposed? N/A  
a. What is the minimum lot size proposed? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Will proposed action require any authorization(s) for the formation of sewer or water districts? ☐ YES ☒ NO
11. Will the proposed action create a demand for any community provided services (recreation, education, police, fire protection)? ☐ YES ☒ NO  
a. If yes, is existing capacity sufficient to handle projected demand? ☐ YES ☐ NO
12. Will the proposed action result in the generation of traffic significantly above present levels? ☐ YES ☒ NO  
a. If yes, is the existing road network adequate to handle the additional traffic. ☐ YES ☐ NO

## D. Informational Details

Attach any additional information as may be needed to clarify your project. If there are or may be any adverse impacts associated with your proposal, please discuss such impacts and the measures which you propose to mitigate or avoid them.

## E. Verification

I certify that the information provided above is true to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant/Sponsor Name New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Date July 20, 2004n

Signature Peter Frank for Tom Martin /s/ Title \_\_\_\_\_

If the action is in the Coastal Area, and you are a state agency, complete the Coastal Assessment Form before proceeding with this assessment.

## PART 2 - PROJECT IMPACTS AND THEIR MAGNITUDE

Responsibility of Lead Agency

### General Information (Read Carefully)

- ▶ In completing the form the reviewer should be guided by the question: Have my responses and determinations been reasonable? The reviewer is not expected to be an expert environmental analyst.
- ▶ The Examples provided are to assist the reviewer by showing types of impacts and wherever possible the threshold of magnitude that would trigger a response in column 2. The examples are generally applicable throughout the State and for most situations. But, for any specific project or site other examples and/or lower thresholds may be appropriate for a Potential Large Impact response, thus requiring evaluation in Part 3.
- ▶ The impacts of each project, on each site, in each locality, will vary. Therefore, the examples are illustrative and have been offered as guidance. They do not constitute an exhaustive list of impacts and thresholds to answer each question.
- ▶ The number of examples per question does not indicate the importance of each question.
- ▶ In identifying impacts, consider long term, short term and cumulative effects.

### Instructions (Read carefully)

- Answer each of the 20 questions in PART 2. Answer Yes if there will be any impact.
- Maybe answers should be considered as Yes answers.
- If answering Yes to a question then check the appropriate box(column 1 or 2)to indicate the potential size of the impact. If impact threshold equals or exceeds any example provided, check column 2. If impact will occur but threshold is lower than example, check column 1.
- Identifying that an Impact will be potentially large (column 2) does not mean that it is also necessarily significant. Any large impact must be evaluated in PART 3 to determine significance. Identifying an impact in column 2 simply asks that it be looked at further.
- If reviewer has doubt about size of the impact then consider the impact as potentially large and proceed to PART 3.
- If a potentially large impact checked in column 2 can be mitigated by change(s) in the project to a small to moderate impact, also check the Yes box in column 3. A No response indicates that such a reduction is not possible. This must be explained in Part 3.

### IMPACT ON LAND

1. Will the Proposed Action result in a physical ☐ NO ☒ YES change to the project site?

Examples that would apply to column 2

- Any construction on slopes of 15% or greater, (15 foot rise per 100 foot of length), or where the general slopes in the project area exceed 10%.
- Construction on land where the depth to the water table is less than 3 feet.
- Construction of paved parking area for 1,000 or more vehicles.

1 Small to Moderate Impact	2 Potential Large Impact	3 Can Impact be Mitigated by Project Change
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction on land where bedrock is exposed or generally within 3 feet of existing ground surface.</li> <li>Construction that will continue for more than 1 year or involve more than one phase or stage.</li> <li>Excavation for mining purposes that would remove more than 1,000 tons of natural material (i.e., rock or soil) per year.</li> <li>Construction or expansion of a sanitary landfill.</li> <li>Construction in a designated floodway.</li> <li>Other impacts      <u>Impacts from trail and parking lot construction</u></li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Will there be an effect to any unique or unusual land forms found on the site? (i.e., cliffs, dunes, geological)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Specific land forms: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

	1 Small to Moderate Impact	2 Potential Large Impact	3 Can Impact be Mitigated by Project Change
<b>IMPACT ON WATER</b>			
3. Will Proposed Action affect any water body designated as protected? (Under Articles 15, 24, 25 of the Environmental Conservation Law, ECL)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES			
Examples that would apply to column 2			
• Developable area of site contains a protected water body.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Dredging more than 100 cubic yards of material from channel of a protected stream.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Extension of utility distribution facilities through a protected water body.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Construction in a designated freshwater or tidal wetland.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Other impacts _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Will Proposed Action affect any non-protected existing or new body of water?			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES			
Examples that would apply to column 2			
• A 10% increase or decrease in the surface area of any body of water or more than a 10 acre increase or decrease.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Construction of a body of water that exceeds 10 acres of surface area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Other impacts _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Will Proposed Action affect surface or groundwater quality or quantity?			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES			
Examples that would apply to column 2			
• Proposed Action will require a discharge permit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Proposed Action requires use of a source of water that does not have approval to serve proposed (project) action.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Proposed Action requires water supply from wells with greater than 45 gallons per minute pumping capacity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No



- [illegible]

	1 Small to Moderate Impact	2 Potential Large Impact	3 Can Impact be Mitigated by Project Change	
<div style="text-align: right;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO   <input type="checkbox"/> YES </div> <p>Examples that would apply to column 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction of one or more species listed on the New York or Federal list, using the site, over or near the site, or found on the site.</li> <li>Removal of any portion of a critical or significant wildlife habitat.</li> <li>Application of pesticide or herbicide more than twice a year, other than for agricultural purposes.</li> <li>Other impacts _____</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9. Will Proposed Action substantially affect non-threatened or non-endangered species? <div style="text-align: right;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO   <input type="checkbox"/> YES </div> <p>Examples that would apply to column 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed Action would substantially interfere with any resident or migratory fish, shellfish or wildlife species.</li> <li>Proposed Action requires the removal of more than 10 acres of mature forest (over 100 years of age) or other locally important vegetation.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL LAND RESOURCES</b>				
10. Will Proposed Action affect agricultural land resources? <div style="text-align: right;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO   <input type="checkbox"/> YES </div> <p>Examples that would apply to column 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Proposed Action would sever, cross or limit access to agricultural land (includes cropland, hayfields, pasture, vineyard, orchard, etc.)</li> <li>Construction activity would excavate or compact the soil profile of agricultural land.</li> <li>The Proposed Action would irreversibly convert more than 10 acres of agricultural land or, if located in an Agricultural District, more than 2.5 acres of agricultural land.</li> <li>The Proposed Action would disrupt or prevent installation of agricultural land management systems (e.g., subsurface drain lines, outlet ditches, strip cropping); or create a need for such measures (e.g. cause a farm field to drain poorly due to increased runoff).</li> <li>Other impacts _____</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>IMPACT ON AESTHETIC RESOURCES</b>				
11. Will Proposed Action affect aesthetic resources? (If necessary, use the Visual EAF Addendum in Section 617.20, Appendix B.) <div style="text-align: right;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO   <input type="checkbox"/> YES </div> <p>Examples that would apply to column 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed land uses, or project components obviously different from or in sharp contrast to current surrounding land use patterns, whether man-made or natural.</li> <li>Proposed land uses, or project components visible to users of aesthetic resources which will eliminate or significantly reduce their enjoyment of the aesthetic qualities of that resource.</li> <li>Project components that will result in the elimination or significant screening of scenic views known to be important to the area.</li> <li>Other impacts _____</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No



15. Will there be an effect to existing transportation systems?

☒ NO ☐ YES

Examples that would apply to column 2

- Alteration of present patterns of movement of people and/or goods.
- Proposed Action will result in major traffic problems.
- Other impacts

## IMPACT ON ENERGY

16. Will Proposed Action affect the community's sources of fuel or energy supply?

☒ NO ☐ YES

Examples that would apply to column 2

- Proposed Action will cause a greater than 5% increase in the use of any form of energy in the municipality.
- Proposed Action will require the creation or extension of an energy transmission or supply system to serve more than 50 single or two family residences or to serve a major commercial or industrial use.
- Other impacts

## NOISE AND ODOR IMPACT

17. Will there be objectionable odors, noise, or vibration as a result of the Proposed Action?

☒ NO ☐ YES

Examples that would apply to column 2

- Blasting within 1,500 feet of a hospital, school or other sensitive facility.
- Odors will occur routinely (more than one hour per day).
- Proposed Action will produce operating noise exceeding the local ambient noise levels for noise outside of structures.
- Proposed Action will remove natural barriers that would act as a noise screen.
- Other impacts

## IMPACT ON PUBLIC HEALTH

18. Will Proposed Action affect public health and safety?

☒ NO ☐ YES

Examples that would apply to column 2

- Proposed Action may cause a risk of explosion or release of hazardous substances (i.e. oil, pesticides, chemicals, radiation, etc.) in the event of accident or upset conditions, or there may be a chronic low level discharge or emission.
- Proposed Action may result in the burial of “hazardous wastes” in any form (i.e. toxic, poisonous, highly reactive, radioactive, irritating, infectious, etc.)
- Storage facilities for one million or more gallons of liquefied natural gas or other flammable liquids.

[illegible]

- Proposed Action may result in the excavation or other disturbance within 2,000 feet of a site used for the disposal of solid or hazardous waste.
- Other impacts \_\_\_\_\_

## IMPACT ON GROWTH AND CHARACTER OF COMMUNITY OR NEIGHBORHOOD

19. Will Proposed Action affect the character of the existing community?

☒ NO ☐ YES

Examples that would apply to column 2

- The permanent population of the city, town or village in which the project is located is likely to grow by more than 5%.
- The municipal budget for capital expenditures or operating services will increase by more than 5% per year as a result of this project.
- Proposed Action will conflict with officially adopted plans or goals.
- Proposed Action will cause a change in the density of land use.
- Proposed Action will replace or eliminate existing facilities, structures or areas of historic importance to the community.
- Development will create a demand for additional community services (e.g. schools, police and fire, etc.)
- Proposed Action will set an important precedent for future projects.
- Proposed Action will create or eliminate employment.
- Other impacts \_\_\_\_\_

1 Small to Moderate Impact	2 Potential Large Impact	3 Can Impact be Mitigated by Project Change	
		Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Is there, or is there likely to be, public controversy related to potential adverse environment impacts?

☒ NO ☐ YES

If Any Action in Part 2 Is Identified as a Potential Large Impact or

If you Cannot Determine the Magnitude of Impact, Proceed to Part 3

## Part 3 - EVALUATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPACTS

### Responsibility of Lead Agency

Part 3 must be prepared if one or more impact(s) is considered to be potentially large, even if the impact(s) may be mitigated.

#### Instructions

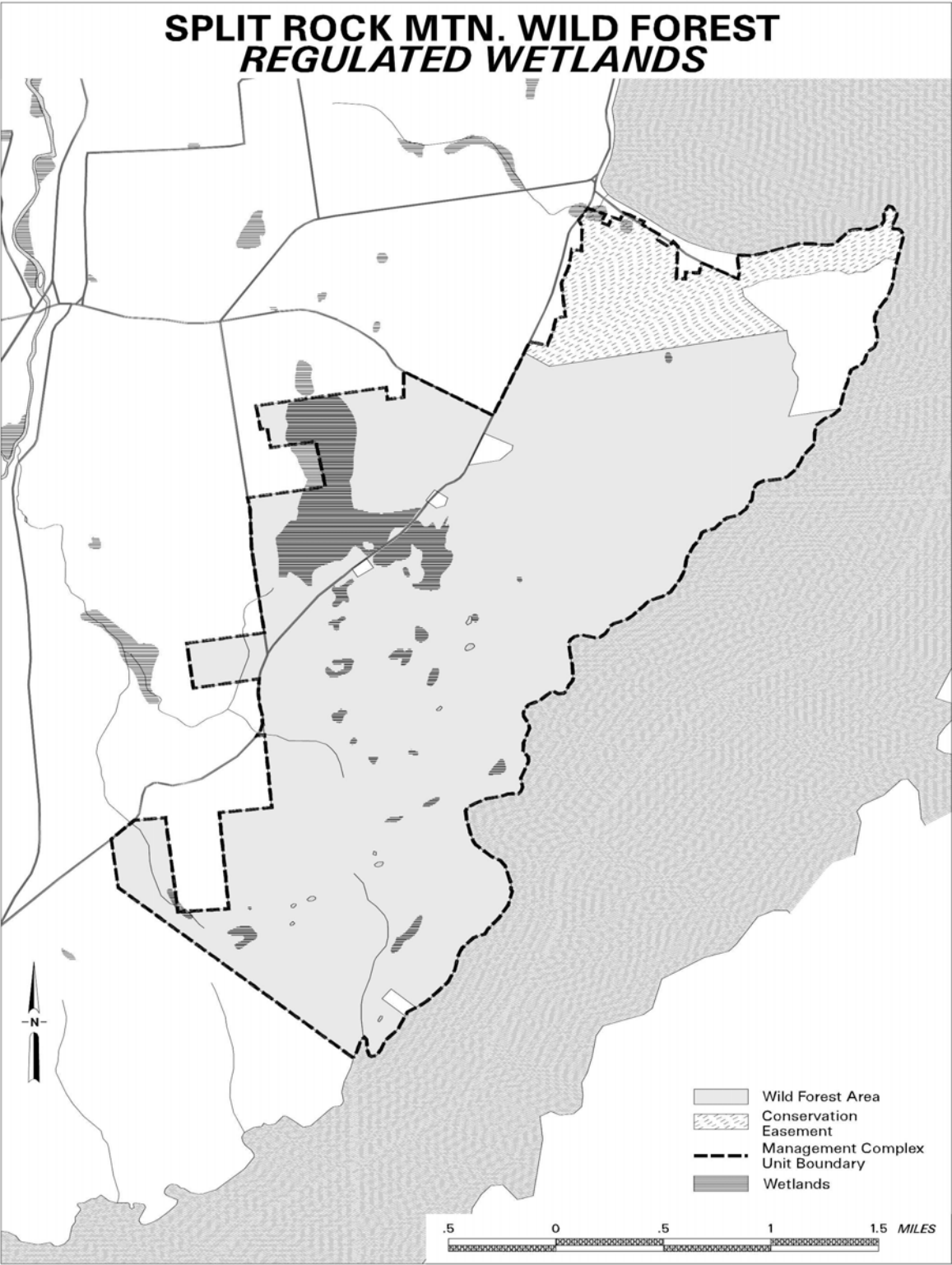
Discuss the following for each impact identified in Column 2 of Part 2:

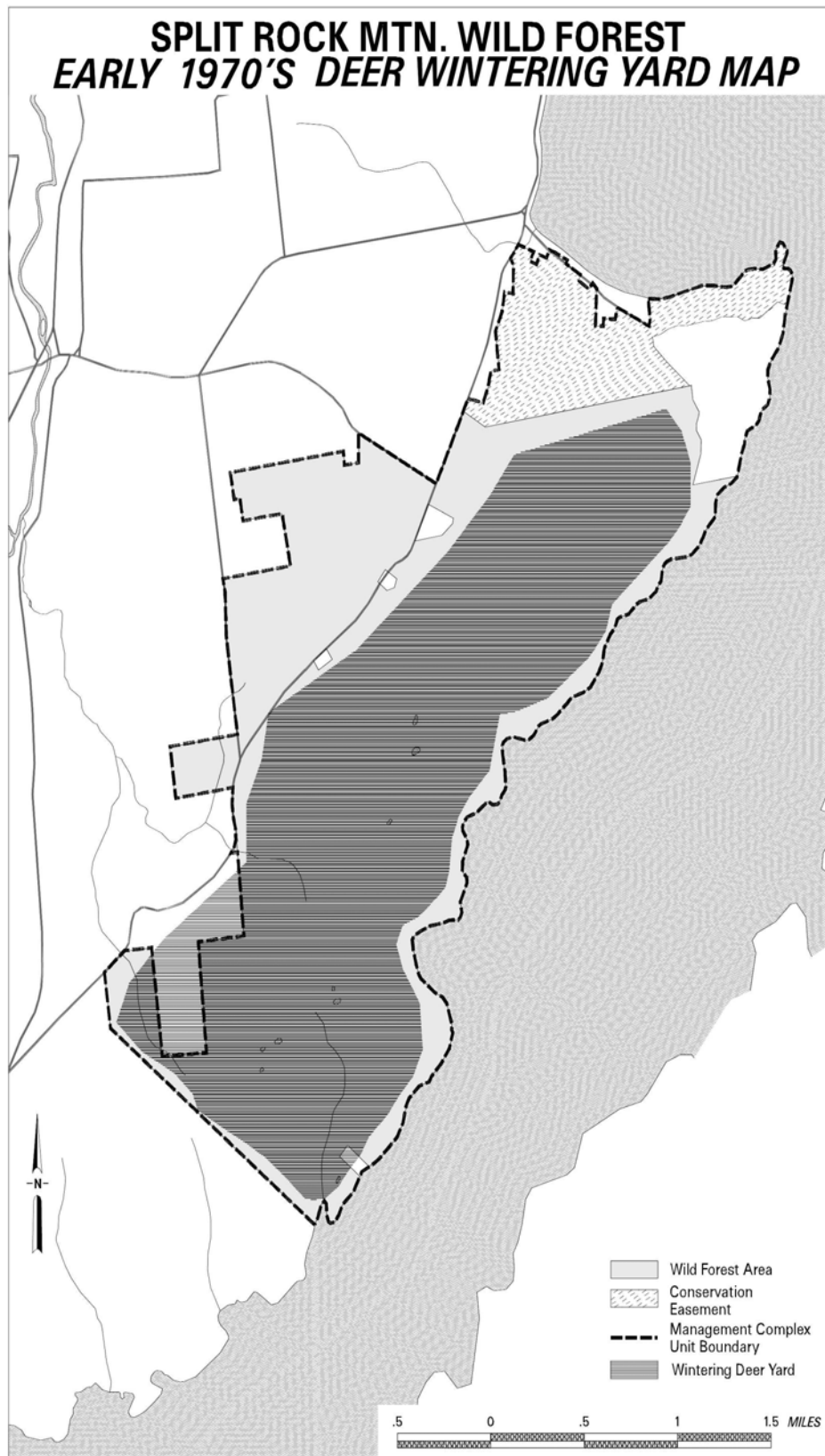
1. Briefly describe the impact.
2. Describe (if applicable) how the impact could be mitigated or reduced to a small to moderate impact by project change(s).
3. Based on the information available, decide if it is reasonable to conclude that this impact is important.

To answer the question of importance, consider:

- The probability of the impact occurring
- The duration of the impact
- Its irreversibility, including permanently lost resources of value
- Whether the impact can or will be controlled
- The regional consequence of the impact
- Its potential divergence from local needs and goals
- Whether known objections to the project relate to this impact.

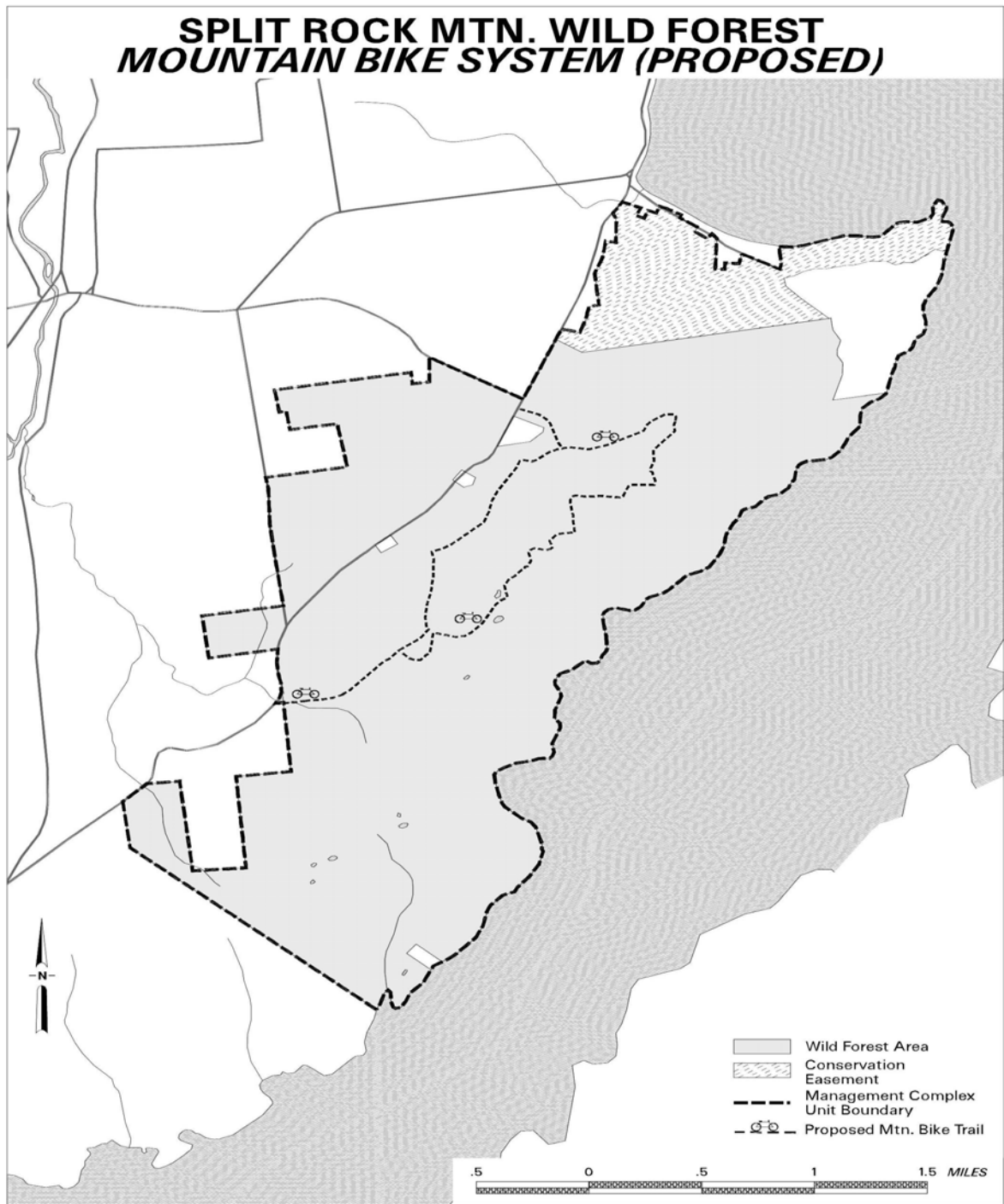
APPENDIX FOURTEEN- Regulated Wetlands Map







## APPENDIX SIXTEEN- Maps



**WHALLONSBURG  
FISHING ACCESS SITE**

The map shows the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site, a black dot on the river. The river flows from the top left towards the bottom right. Several roads are shown: Cook Road, Walker Road, Deleware And Hudson Road, Christian Road, Whallons Cross Road, and Auler Hill Road. A dashed line with cross-ticks represents a railroad track. A north arrow is in the bottom left, and a scale bar (0 to 1200 feet) is in the bottom right.



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Revised 2/22/08