New York State

DEC

Division of Lands and Forests

Bare Hill Unit Management Plan

March 2002

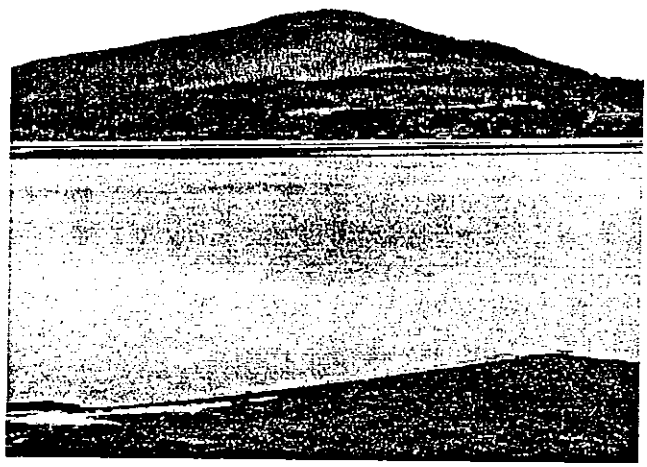
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

George E. Pataki, *Governor*

Erin M. Crotty, *Commissioner*

Bare Hill Unit Management Plan

December, 2001



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

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Record

SUBJECT: Bare Hill Unit Management Plan

DATE: December 21, 2001

The unit management plan for the Bare Hill Unique Area has been completed. The Plan is consistent with Department policy and procedure, involved public participation and is consistent with Environmental Conservation Law, and Department rules and regulations. The plan includes management objectives for a twenty year period and is hereby approved and adopted.

Erin M. Crotty, Commissioner

PREFACE

It is the policy of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to manage state lands for multiple benefits to serve the people of New York State. This Unit Management Plan is the first step in carrying out that policy. The plan has been developed to address management activities on this unit for the next 10 year period, with a review due in 5 years. Some management recommendations may extend beyond the 10 year period.

Factors such as budget constraints, wood product markets, and forest health problems may necessitate deviations from the scheduled management activities.

The acquisition of Bare Hill as a Unique area was partially based on local legends of the Seneca Nation of Native Americans, and the comments of the Seneca Nation were sought while developing this plan.

THE UNIT MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

New York State's management policy for public lands follow a multiple use concept established by New York's Environmental Conservation Law. This allows for diverse enjoyment of state lands by the people of the state. Multiple use management addresses all of the demands placed on these lands: watershed management, timber management, wildlife management, rare plant and community protection, recreational use, and aesthetic appreciation.

In this plan, an initial resource inventory and other information is provided, followed by an assessment of existing and anticipated uses and demands. This information is used to set goals and management objectives. Management actions tables provide an estimated cost and timetable for accomplishing these objectives.

Table of Contents

PREFACE ii
THE UNIT MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS ii

BARE HILL UNIT LOCATION MAP 1

INTRODUCTION 2
HISTORY OF UNIQUE AREAS 2
HISTORY OF BARE HILL UNIT MANAGEMENT AREA 2
PRE-EUROPEAN HISTORY 2
POST EUROPEAN HISTORY 3

INFORMATION ON THE UNIT 5
IDENTIFICATION 5
GEOGRAPHY 5
CLIMATE 5
ADJACENT LAND - EXISTING USES 6
GEOLOGY 6
VEGETATIVE TYPES AND STAGES 6
WETLANDS AND WATER RESOURCES 7
WETLANDS / PONDED WATERS 7
STREAMS 8
AQUIFERS 8
SIGNIFICANT PLANTS AND EXEMPLARY PLANT COMMUNITIES 8
ROADS 8
RECREATION 8
WILDLIFE 9
ADDITIONAL FACILITIES 9
MINERAL RESOURCES 9
OIL AND GAS 9
MINING 10
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES 10
HISTORIC SITES 10

NEEDS, ISSUES AND POLICY CONSTRAINTS 12
FUNDING 12
CURRENT KNOWN ILLEGAL USE 12
SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED ISSUES 13
ACCESS 13
TIMBER MANAGEMENT 13
PRESCRIBED FIRE 13
WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT 13
PUBLIC RECREATION AND USE 13
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS 14
OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION 14
AESTHETICS 14
CULTURAL RESOURCES AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION 15
POLICY CONSTRAINTS 15

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW (ECL) 15
NEW YORK CODE RULES AND REGULATIONS (6NYCRR) 16
DEPARTMENT POLICIES 16

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 17
VISION 17
PRIORITY 17
ACCESS 17
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT 18
OPEN AREAS 19
RESTORATION ACTIVITIES 20
POTENTIAL PROBLEM SPECIES 22
GRASSLAND SPECIES REINTRODUCTION 24
MATURE NATURAL HARDWOOD FOREST STANDS: 26
NATURAL HARDWOOD FOREST STAND IN NEED OF THINNING: 26
BLACK LOCUST STAND TO BE CUT TO MAINTAIN SCENIC VIEW: 26
CONIFER PLANTATION FOREST NEEDING TREATMENT: 26
NO VEGETATIVE ACTION PROPOSED: 26
MAINTAIN AS OPEN: 27
WATERSHED PROTECTION 28
FISH AND WILDLIFE 28
PUBLIC RECREATION AND USE 29
UNIT MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT 30
LAND ACQUISITION 31
MINERAL RESOURCES 31
ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES 32

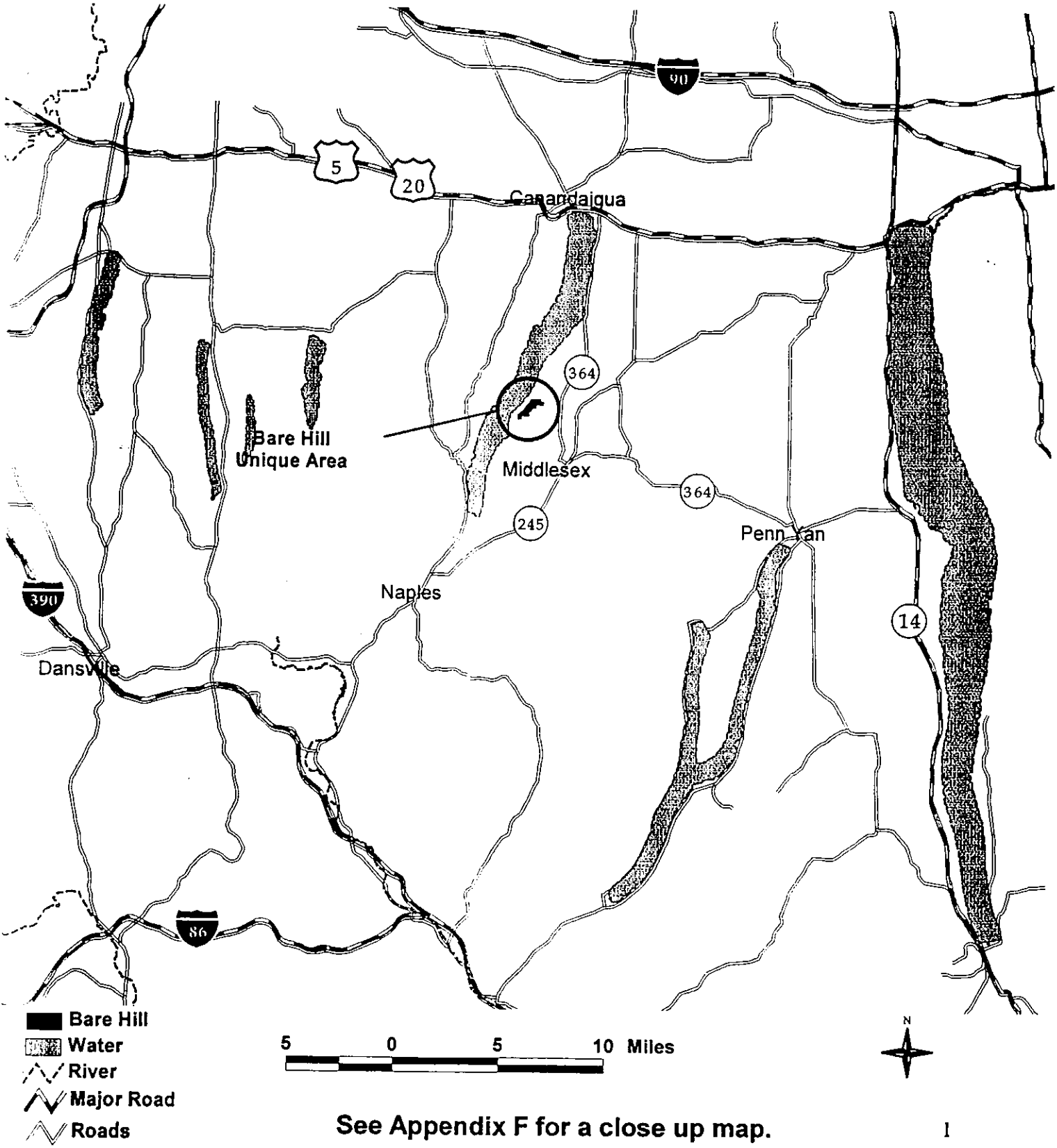
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT 33
INITIAL MAILING 33
SECOND MAILING 33
PUBLIC MEETING 33
FINAL NOTICE 33

APPENDICES 34
APPENDIX A : LEGEND OF BARE HILL 34
APPENDIX B: ANIMALS ON BARE HILL UNIT 36
BIRDS 36
MAMMALS 37
REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS 38
RESIDENT FISH SPECIES 39
APPENDIX C : PUBLIC COMMENT 40
APPENDIX D : TAXES 50
APPENDIX E : FACILITIES 50
APPENDIX F: MAPS 51
APPENDIX G: OAK OPENINGS 53
WHAT THEY ARE: 53
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: 53
GLOSSARY 55

List of Tables and Figures

ACREAGE OF STATE LAND 5
VEGETATIVE TYPES AND STAGES 7
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR ACCESS 18
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR VEGETATION 27
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR WATERSHED AND WETLANDS 28
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE 29
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR RECREATION 29
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES 31
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR LAND ACQUISITION 31
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR MINERAL RESOURCES 32
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR HISTORICAL SITES 32

BARE HILL UNIT LOCATION MAP



See Appendix F for a close up map.

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY OF UNIQUE AREAS

The Park and Recreation Land Acquisition Act of 1960 and the Environmental Quality Bond Acts of 1972 and 1986 contained provisions for the acquisition of State Forest lands, Unique properties, and areas which provide open space or special recreational opportunities. These lands would serve multiple purposes involving the conservation and development of natural resources, including the preservation of scenic areas, watershed protection, forestry, and recreation. Bare Hill Unique Area was purchased under the 1986 Bond Act because of its scenic beauty and its legendary ties to the Seneca Indian Nation.

Today there are nearly 700,000 acres of State Forests and Unique Areas throughout the state. The use of these lands is important to the economy and to the health and well-being of the people of the state.

HISTORY OF BARE HILL UNIT MANAGEMENT AREA

PRE-EUROPEAN HISTORY

By G. Peter Jemison

Today the Seneca Nation and Bare Hill are linked together by a story of mythological proportions. Dr. Arthur C. Parker in 1948 sought to discover the early record of this link and the origin of the great serpent legend. Briefly, he traced the story to the third edition of the biography The Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison written by James Seaver.

The earliest written account describing the origin of the Seneca people appears in a history written by David Cusick, Tuscarora, titled "Ancient History of the Six Nations". What appeared in the third edition of the Mary Jemison book was not something that Mary herself related but it was something added by a later informant. Dr. Parker was himself part Seneca, he directed the institution that became the Rochester Museum and Science Center and earlier the New York State Museum. His careful analysis of the artifacts from Bare Hill and South Hill both located on Lake Canandaigua led him to conclude that South Hill was more closely linked to the Seneca Nation. Bare Hill known in Seneca as Genundewah produced artifacts from a cultural group Parker describes as Algonkin. South Hill known in Seneca as Nundawao and located at the head of Lake Canandaigua produced Seneca artifacts.

Dr. Parker was further persuaded that Nundawao the earliest Seneca town existed just south of South Hill in a bowl of land not far from Naples, New York. By his account the descriptions of the Seneca Nation's hill of origin all pointed to South Hill. In the Seneca language we call ourselves Onundowahgah or people of the great hill. Therefore, the great hill associated with the Seneca Nation Dr. Parker concluded must be South Hill.

However, the legend of Bare Hill persists today and in many ways Parker's work in the 1950's added to its life. Arthur C. Parker wrote a number of pageants that were performed by the Nundawaga Society they drew attention to both Bare Hill and South Hill. He began lighting a huge bonfire on top of Bare Hill to commemorate the Harvest season and draw to a close summer along Canandaigua Lake. A similar fire was also lit on Keuka Lake, interestingly both on Bare Hill and on Keuka Lake the tradition

continues the Saturday evening before Labor Day.

The Seneca people believe we originate as a people on Turtle Island or North America. We don't believe the Bering Strait land bridge provided our access to this continent from Asia. Our earliest stories after our emergence from the earth describe great beasts of the type that roamed North America after the last ice age. The Seneca people do have a story about enormous snakes that inhabit the lakes. Arthur Parker collected a newspaper account of a sixty-foot snake that was seen by people aboard a cruise boat on one of the Great Lakes in the 1950's.

The Seneca Nation is part of the confederacy of Six Nations known as the Haudenosaunee called by others the Iroquois confederacy. The Seneca Nation is the Keeper of the Western Door and one of the Elder Brothers of the confederacy. The other members include the Cayuga Nation, Onondaga Nation, Oneida Nation, Mohawk Nation and the last to join, the Tuscarora Nation. This confederacy of Indian Nations was founded on the message of Peace, Power and Righteousness about a thousand years ago.

Where then does this leave our beloved Bare Hill? It is situated squarely within original Seneca territory that was bounded on the east by the ridge running between Cayuga and Seneca Lake. Bounded on the north by Lake Ontario and bounded on the west by the Genesee River its southern boundary ran south of the western Finger Lakes approximating the contemporary Pennsylvania border. That territory existed until the 1654-57 period when the Seneca Nation defeated the Neutral and Erie Nations and extended their western border out to the Ohio River.

I myself have taken a number of Seneca Elders to Bare Hill in the past and could not find among them any that knew of the legend connecting the great serpent to the Seneca Nation's origin. I was told by Chief Corbet Sundown from the Tonawanda Band of Seneca "that's a white man's story." In the end Dr. Parker concluded that the story was an allegory for a war that took place between the Seneca and the Snakes, the Susquehannoks, a Native American nation the Seneca ultimately defeated.

My Seneca Elders caution me not to make up stories to fit people's preconceived notions about Bare Hill. They see no harm in continuing the Seneca Heritage Day begun by the Middlesex Historical Society nor is the Ring of Fire harmful. I don't see any harm associated with the great boulder moved to the hill's crest. It becomes a destination for hikers. However, I don't believe we can describe it as significant to the Seneca Nation.

In conclusion I support the effort to protect Bare Hill and its fragile environment and I anticipate a plan that will allow for the use of the hill by many diverse people. Safety and respect are the key words I'd emphasize when designing its use by the public.

POST EUROPEAN HISTORY

Bare Hill has gone through many changes since the coming of the white settlers. At the time of the Revolutionary War the Seneca Nation had been living peacefully on land that was their birthplace.

During the war they sided with the British and after the war General Washington sent Major Sullivan on a march through the area and all the villages and crops were burned, forcing the Senecas to move to other locations.

In 1788 a group of investors represented by Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham made a deal with the Native Americans to pay

$5,500 annually forever. However because of financial problems this contract did not hold for long. In 1789 the land was granted by quick-claim deed to Arnold Potter. After this Potter offered the land to settlers at very low prices. One of the first settlers to the area was Capt. John Smith.

The hill was bare when the white settlers took possession. When Arnold Potter owned the land he raised wheat. After Perry and John Collins purchased it they sowed grass seed and the land was used for pasture. For several years it was used for this purpose. Farmers who owned the land would drive their sheep to pasture for the summer and take them back to their farms for the winter. There was a saying in Middlesex that "You should go over a hill as though there was a flock of sheep on the other side." This word of caution was necessary as they were driven on the main roads. As small farms and sheep flocks disappeared from the area the land began to be overgrown with brush and trees. Now, on a walk, it is almost impossible to see the lake.

In 1920 the Town of Middlesex Highway Dept. used the stones which were thought to be part of an "Indian Fort" for road fill. All that is left of the fort is a three foot deep hole in the ground about 45 feet wide and 75 feet long.

In 1986 Allen Loomis announced a plan to create a subdivision for 33 homes on land that he owned on Bare Hill. Local residents and Seneca natives objected. In June 1988 he sold 106 acres to the Trust for Public Land for $172,500.00 and another 50 acres that he owned jointly with Robert VanEpps for $52,000.00. The Trust also acquired a 50 acre parcel that the East Shore Cottagers had previously bought from Albert Bates. Afterwards the Trust bought another 90 acres from Ann Arnold. The Trust sold all the land to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in 1989. This is now the site for the bonfire that signals the "Ring of Fire" on Canandaigua Lake.

INFORMATION ON THE UNIT

IDENTIFICATION

Bare Hill Unit Management Plan includes the following:

Table 1 ACREAGE OF STATE LAND

YATES COUNTY	
NAME	**ACREAGE**
Bare Hill State Forest	298

GEOGRAPHY

Bare Hill Unit lies at the extreme northern edge of the Allegheny Plateau with elevations ranging from 950 feet to 1540 feet.

The Bare Hill Unique Area is located in the town of Middlesex, Yates County. Bare Hill overlooks Canandaigua Lake, a 16 ½ square mile Finger Lake. The city of Canandaigua and the village of Naples, lie within 20 miles of the area. The city of Rochester, the regions' largest population center, is about 50 miles northwest. Ontario County and the City of Canandaigua manage local recreation facilities located on Canandaigua Lake. Hi Tor Wildlife Management Area is located five miles south at the inlet of Canandaigua Lake.

CLIMATE

The average winter temperature is 26° Fahrenheit and the absolute minimum temperature recorded in the county was -25°F. In summer, the average temperature is 69°F, and the absolute maximum 106°F. Plateau summits are markedly cooler than the lowland farming areas.

Annual precipitation averages 29.8 inches. Precipitation is well distributed throughout the year and is usually adequate for all crops. Fifty-eight percent (17.5") usually falls during the months of April through September. Higher elevations, such as Bare Hill routinely receive more precipitation than at the weather recording station in Penn Yan.

Average seasonal snowfall is 64 inches. In winter, snow occurs frequently and covers the ground much of the time. Snow depths vary greatly with elevation, but on the average, there are 45 days that have at least one inch of accumulated snow. The number of such days varies greatly from year to year.

The average relative humidity in mid-afternoon is about 60%. Humidity is higher at night, and the average at dawn is about 83%.

Sunshine occurs for 65% of daylight hours in the summer and 30% in the winter.

The prevailing wind is from the west to southwest. Average wind speeds are much higher on top of Bare Hill than at weather recording stations. Site specific estimates would be an average of 18 miles per hour.

Climatic data is supplied by the United States Department of Agriculture(USDA) Soil

Conservation Service.

ADJACENT LAND - EXISTING USES

The information contained in this section was obtained from land use / land cover data of the US Geological Survey and the records of the Yates County Real Property Tax Service.

On the east, primary land uses and cover types are crop land and pasture, with a small area of vineyard. On the south, primary cover type is mixed forests, with recreational / residential land uses predominating. On the west and north, primary cover type is mixed forests, with recreational / residential land uses predominating.

Density of housing units (either seasonal or year - round) is significantly higher along the west and north exposures than the eastern and southern exposures. This is due primarily to the presence of Canandaigua Lake and it's associated recreational development.

GEOLOGY

The Wisconsin Ice Sheet retreated from the area 10,000 years ago creating the Finger Lakes. Glaciation remains the dominant geological effect. The soils are glacial till in origin. The underlying parent materials are sedimentary deposits of shale.

Most of the soils on Bare Hill Unique area are of the Aurora-Lansing and the Lordstown-Manlius associations. These soils are shallow to bedrock and are likely to lack moisture in summer. The major soil limitation affecting management is the depth of the soil to bedrock. The Aurora soils are located on top of the hill and Lordstown soils are found on the slopes facing Canandaigua Lake. There is a small area of Ontario and Honeoye soils along Bare Hill Rd. These soils are located on steep slopes of 20% to 60% and are moderately to severely eroded due to past agriculture.

Specific soil series occurring on the Bare Hill Unit are described and mapped in the USDA publication, *Soil Survey of Ontario and Yates Counties, NY.*

VEGETATIVE TYPES AND STAGES

There are six plant communities present in the Bare Hill Unit Management Area, according to Reschke's Ecological Communities of New York State.

These are:

Successional Old Fields are open lands as the result of the abandonment of agricultural fields. This plant community is dominated by five species of goldenrods, timothy and cool season grasses, asters and daisy fleabane, yarrow and Queen-Anne's lace. Shrubs present are gray dogwood and tartarian honeysuckle. Trees and tree seedlings are eastern red cedar, white ash, and scot's pine. In the absence of periodic mowing the shrubs will rapidly take over this community, and turn it into a **Successional Shrubland Community**, examples of which can be seen on Bare Hill, along with **Successional Red Cedar Woodland**.

The Natural Forest Hardwood listed in the table are **Appalachian Oak-Hickory Forests** of various diameter classes. This community is dominated by northern red oak, white oak, shagbark hickory and white ash. Ironwood and maple-leafed viburnum are common in the understory, and black cohosh and sedges are

common. Garlic mustard and European barberry are invasive non-native plants that are also found in this type.

Conifer Plantations were started about 1963 and consist of scot's pine, red pine, white spruce and European larch. These stands tend to have little or no understory plants. Black locust, an aggressive hardwood that is not native to the Finger Lakes is also found, and may have been planted here in **Hardwood Plantations**.

The following table (Table 2) lists vegetative types and stages for the Bare Hill Unit.

Table 2 VEGETATIVE TYPES AND STAGES

Vegetative Type	Acres by Size Class				
	0 -5 in	6 - 11 in	12+ in	other	% of Total
Natural Forest Hardwood	69	111			60.4%
Natural Forest Conifer	12				4.0%
Plantation	25	4			9.7%
Wetland					0.0%
Ponds				3	1.0%
Open/Brush				73	24.5%
Other (Roads, Parking lots, etc.)				1	0.3%
Total (Acres)	106	115	0	77	298

WETLANDS AND WATER RESOURCES

WETLANDS / PONDED WATERS

There are no regulatory freshwater wetlands within the confines of the Bare Hill Unit.

There are four small wetlands identified by the National Wetlands Inventory. All are under ½ acre, and all were created by either excavation or impoundment. The genesis seems to be either farm ponds or gravel mining. Three are classed as permanently flooded, with one classed as semi-permanently flooded. These areas support emergent vegetation at the margins.

STREAMS

This management unit is close to the top of the watershed. Therefore, most streams are intermittent in nature, flowing only during spring run-off or during large summer rain events. Most of the surface water goes via intermittent streams to Canandaigua Lake. As noted in the wetlands section, there are several small ponds or waterholes.

AQUIFERS

The majority of the groundwater in this area is used for residential / commercial uses. The primary aquifer in this area is contained within bedrock. The bedrock has very low porosity, with nearly all groundwater occurring in fractures within the bedrock. Aquifer recharge is accomplished through percolation of surface water to the fractured bedrock. As the soils in this area consist of fine grained and largely unstratified glacial deposits, recharge is fairly slow.

This area is not within a major aquifer, as defined by the US Geological Survey. As the above discussion indicates, the entire area can be considered a recharge area for the existing minor aquifer. Wells can be expected to flow in the range of 1 - 5 gallons per minute.

SIGNIFICANT PLANTS AND EXEMPLARY PLANT COMMUNITIES

No significant plants or exemplary plant communities have been identified in the Bare Hill Unit according to the natural heritage program's definitions. There is an interesting park-like area of Applachian-Oak-Hickory forest in the southern portion of stand A-10 (see Appendix F). This area has not achieved crown closure and contains an impressive understory dominated by five foot high black cohosh (cimicifuga racemosa) plants and also contains grasses and sedges as well as garlic mustard, an invasive weed.

ROADS

The unit is accessed by state, county and town roads. Van Epps road is a town road that directly accesses the Bare Hill Unit. In winter it is maintained just beyond the last permanent occupied dwelling just east of the Bare Hill Unit.

The road system maintained by the state provides administrative access to the area. These roads are moderately built to provide limited access to the Bare Hill Unit. Public motor vehicle use is not allowed unless permitted by the regional forester. All administrative roads are gated and posted accordingly.

RECREATION

The Bare Hill Unit provides recreational opportunities about an hours drive from metropolitan Rochester, and less than a half-hour drive from the Villages of Penn Yan and Canandaigua. Consequently, recreational use can be seasonally concentrated and varied.

Every year on Labor Day there is a ceremonial lighting of a bonfire to start the "ring of fire" or "The Festival of Lights" in which landowners around the perimeter of Canandaigua Lake light fires in celebration of peace and bountiful harvests.

Recreational opportunities in the Bare Hill Unit include:

- Hunting
- Hiking
- Trapping
- Nature study
- Berry and apple-picking, mushrooming, etc.
- Cross-country skiing
- Camping
- Fishing
- Horseback riding
- Mountain biking
- Photography
- Bird watching
- Meditation

Overnight camping is allowed on state forests for groups less than 10 and for up to 3 days. Longer stays and/or larger groups are allowed to camp with a permit obtained from the NYS DEC Forest Rangers, at the Bath sub-office.

ATV use is not legal on the Bare Hill Unit.

Bare Hill is a small area compared to other state land within the area, but hunting is popular on the Bare Hill Unit. Small and big game hunting opportunities exist. White-tailed deer are the primary big game species. Archery, shotgun and muzzleloading seasons are open annually in the fall. Small game include wild turkey, ruffed grouse, pheasant, squirrel, cottontail rabbit and waterfowl. Trapping of furbearers is also encouraged. Winter seasons allow fox, and muskrat trapping, and to a lesser extent, coyote and mink.

WILDLIFE

Management for wildlife has been passively focused on providing the greatest species diversity of endemic species. Grassland management for associated bird species has been an important component of the actions on Bare Hill Unique Area. Forest and grassland management techniques are the primary tools for providing the greatest diversity.

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES

Existing facilities on Bare Hill Unique Area are minimal. A kiosk just inside the administrative road gate provides a place to post information and maps. Van Epps Road ends in a vehicle turn around, with approximately six parking spaces in the designated parking area and additional parking available along Van Epps Road.

MINERAL RESOURCES

OIL AND GAS

All of Yates County has the potential for development of natural gas reserves. The DEC Division of Mineral Resources acts as the leasing agent for oil and gas resources on on DEC lands, with the Division of Lands and Forests has oversight and inspection. Leases are competitively bid for DEC lands and agreements are processed in accordance with state Finance Law by the Office of General Services. A Generic Environmental Impact Statement on the Oil, Gas and Solution Mining Regulatory Program was published in July, 1992. Income from Gas Leases is directed to the General Fund Account for State Forests and Unique Areas, and to the Conservation Fund for Wildlife Management Areas.

There are no active gas leases on the Bare Hill Unit at this time.

Gas wells have been drilled in the northeast corner of the Town of Middlesex in the Rushville Field since the late 1800's. Gas was produced from depths of 800 to 1000 feet in the Devonian Hamilton Group and the Onondaga Limestone. A review of well files, however, indicates that no wells have been drilled in the Bare Hill Unique Area, although the possibility cannot be ruled out that old wells might exist in the area. Caretakers are advised to look for strange depressions in the ground, old pipe sticking out of the ground or a brine kill area. Contact Region 8 Minerals staff if you suspect an old well. Clean Water Bond money is available for plugging old wells on state land.

MINING

There are small reserves of sand and gravel on the east side of the property as evidenced by old borrow pits along Bare Hill Rd. SEQR review is required on all mining permits. There are no other known hard rock mineral deposits at Bare Hill.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The department has followed procedures established in concert with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) in determining the presence of cultural resources on the unit. Although no obvious structures exist, the department is aware that Native American and /or other resources may exist on the unit. These sites have been routinely written about in various documents over the past 30 years. The department will attempt to locate and preserve any structure such as stone walls, fence lines, etc. and update OPRHP of new discoveries whenever necessary.

HISTORIC SITES

In this context the term "historical sites" is used to denote sites that were established during the period of recorded history, and **not** sites that have Native American connotation

The archaeological resources and the Indian legends and history surrounding this area really overshadow the historical resources, which are quite ordinary.

During the beginning of the "European settlement" era, this area was a portion of the Phelps & Gorham purchase. The primary use of the land was agricultural. It was used as a pasture, primarily for sheep grazing.

As far as we can tell, there are no building foundations contained within the Bare Hill Unit. There are remains of fences and stone walls, which are, presumably, tied to the sheep grazing era of the area's history. There is also a large steel well casing just inside the gate. This is a water well, and was used to water sheep. The ponds located on the property were dug to provide water for the sheep, probably in the 1950's or '60's.

There is also evidence of a small scale stone quarrying operation on the west side of the Bare Hill Unit. This was most likely operated for building stone (foundation rock) in the local neighborhood. We don't believe this was a commercial enterprise, just a local source of stone.

There also appears to be a borrow pit on the east side of the area, along Bare Hill Road.

This was probably operated for low quality gravel / glacial till for road work. Here again, we do not believe this was ever a commercial enterprise. It probably appeared in relatively recent history.

NEEDS, ISSUES AND POLICY CONSTRAINTS

This plan strives to manage the diversity of the Bare Hill Units biological and social resources for multiple use to serve the needs of the people of New York State. In order to manage the Bare Hill Unit for multiple use, NYS DEC must manage the ecosystem in a holistic manner while reconciling the many and sometimes conflicting demands on the ecosystem. This must be done within the framework of the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), rules and regulations, and department policies and procedures.

On the Bare Hill Unit, many issues including public needs form the basis for the objectives and management actions set forth in this plan. The NYS DEC recognizes that planning must be done today to ensure effective management in the future.

FUNDING

Currently NYS DECs' Bureau of Public Lands has a limited budget to manage of all NYS DEC lands.

Funding is primarily derived from:

- Services in lieu of payment during commercial sales of forest products. (These services are limited to the specific location where the sale occurs and must be directly linked to the sale.)
- Capital construction account (State Legislature General Fund monies)
- Rehabilitation & Improvement account (State Legislature General Fund monies)
- Stewardship - Special Revenue Other (SRO) account. Note: The primary source of revenue for the SRO account is from commercial sales of forest products listed above.
- Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). This account is primarily funded from environmental fines and other appropriations by the legislature. This fund may be used for a wide variety of projects including habitat enhancement for plants and animals, recreational facilities and forestry improvements such as pre-commercial thinning, artificial regeneration, and control of invasive species.

Regional allocations from these accounts must be shared by all NYS DEC lands within the region. There is no specific budget established to manage an individual site. Funding is distributed based on priorities for all areas within the region. Tasks listed in the work schedule may not be met due to lack of funds or higher priority projects within the region.

Cooperative partnerships using the "Adopt A Natural Resource Program" with private conservation organizations or other interested parties can be used to complete projects on the Bare Hill Unit. These partnerships are a valuable supplemental source for providing needed services.

CURRENT KNOWN ILLEGAL USE

- ATV and dirt bike use
- Off road driving
- Dumping / littering
- Vandalism
- Construction of permanent blinds and/or tree stands
- Poaching
- Underage drinking

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED ISSUES

ACCESS

It is NYS DEC policy to provide appropriate public and administrative access on the Bare Hill Unit. Access is necessary for both public use and land management. However, appropriate restrictions on access may positively contribute to the natural character of state lands.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Plant communities are by nature dynamic and ever-changing. Young trees stands get older, and species composition changes with time. Disturbances from fire, wind, insects, disease, timber harvest, and other land-use practices have been an important part of the history of New York forests and have determined the composition and structure of todays forests. By applying different forest management or silvicultural practices, land managers can affect change in vegetative types and stages and associated use by wildlife.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

Currently, there is no plan for prescribed fire in Bare Hill Unique Area.

If prescribed fire is going to be used as part of the Unit Management Plan (UMP), a prescribed fire plan must be used. The plan must state objectives that assist in managing the plant community and achieve the UMP goals.

Issues that should be considered in preparing a prescribed fire plan are:

- Protecting **adjoining** landowners properties
- Public perception on "controlled burns" escaping prescription
- Smoke management
- Publicity from prescribed fire operations
- Visibility of the Bare Hill Unique Area from surrounding towns and major highways and potential for 911 phone calls during burns
- Public forum/meetings to provide an opportunity to voice concerns and provide a setting for input and education about prescribed fire
- Goals to be achieved by using prescribed fire such as: re-establishing native grasses, controlling invasive non-native plant species, establishing a "nursery" for native grasses and establishing a "heritage" seed program for other properties

WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

Wildlife is an important component of the Bare Hill Unit. Both game species and non-game species are an important part of the ecosystem. There is continued support for management for a diversity of species, but it is a small area which limits the management options available.

PUBLIC RECREATION AND USE

The Bare Hill Unit is heavily used for recreation, both by the local population and from farther away. There is continued support for the annual lighting of a bonfire on Saturday evening of Labor Day weekend to signal the

"ring of fire" in which fires are lit around the perimeter of the lake.

Problems that were reported include wanting better clean up of trash, continued and better exclusion of vehicles, including ATV's and dirt bikes.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

Required funds to maintain the 298 acre Bare Hill Unit are beyond current budgets. Public comments suggest that present conditions may be acceptable, although there is some support for parking lot improvements, and adding outhouses, for example. There is a need to identify additional funding and actively search out cooperative agreements and partnerships to maintain roads and trails and other facilities in the Bare Hill Unit.

NYS DECs' formal cooperative program, called the Adopt-a-Natural-Resource Stewardship Program, encourages individuals and groups to undertake activities that meet management needs of state-owned natural resources. Multiple bĕnefits of such partnerships have been identified; serving as a means to complete work that helps preserve, maintain and enhance natural resources at minimal cost to the New York State. It is also an opportunity for organizations, groups and individuals to show willing support for conservation efforts, large and small. Such efforts may involve the clean up of vandalism, litter pick up, establishment or maintenance of nature trails, providing interpretive services for school groups and other citizens, management of fish and wildlife habitats and other positive benefits to the site and natural resources.

OPEN SPACE

CONSERVATION

New York State has been a leader in recognizing the value of open, undeveloped land. In 1998 Governor George Pataki issued a plan prepared by NYS DEC and the NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historical Preservation, entitled, **"Conserving Open Space in New York State".**

The Open Space Plan of 1998 characterizes the need for perpetuation, in a grand sense, of open space and natural landscapes as, "The quality and character of the lives of the people of New York depend upon the quality and character of the land on which we live. These lands shape the way we spend our leisure time, affect the long term strength of our economy, determine whether we have clean air and water, support the web of living things of which we are a part, and affect how we think about ourselves and relate to other New Yorkers." The Open Space Plan outlines what open space should be saved and includes priorities and guidelines for public land acquisition. This plan will be followed on the Bare Hill Unit.

AESTHETICS

In addition to providing open space and a place to experience wild land, public lands should be also be pleasing to the eye and soul. Scenic vistas, the use of natural materials for construction, and the attention to quality in design and maintenance are important components of effectively managing the Bare Hill Unit. Structures such as cell phone towers, gas wells, etc., are not compatible with this concept and therefore will be prohibited on the area. The challenge is to attract users to the site without destroying what has drawn them there in the first place.

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Public comments supported the protection and enhancement of historic and cultural resources, readily identifiable as valued segments of the common heritage of New York's citizens.

Comments specifically suggested identification and protection of archaeological sites. This may become critical as grassland restoration efforts proceed.

Comments also suggested providing more historical information about the area, particularly this area's early history.

Oil and gas leasing and other mineral exploration and development could have significant impacts on cultural resources, particularly when knowledge of cultural resources is limited. As discussed in the minerals section, this area appears to be unsuitable for minerals activity involving surface disturbance.

POLICY CONSTRAINTS

The laws, regulations, and policies listed below provide broad guidelines within which this plan is prepared. The Environmental Conservation Law of the State of New York is available to the public at local libraries, NYS DEC offices, from private vendors, and at www.dec.state.ny.us/website/regs/index.htm/ on the internet. Other rules, regulations and policies can be accessed by contacting any NYS DEC committee members.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW (ECL)

ECL Article 8 - Environmental Quality Review
ECL Article 9 - Lands and Forests
ECL Article 11 - Fish and Wildlife
ECL Article 15 - Water Resources
ECL Article 23 - Mineral Resources
ECL Article 24 - Freshwater Wetlands
ECL Article 33 - Pesticides
ECL Article 51 - Implementation of Environmental Quality Bond Act of 1972
ECL Article 71 - Enforcement

NEW YORK CODE RULES AND REGULATIONS (6NYCRR)

Title 6

Chapter I	- Fish and Wildlife
Chapter II	- Lands and Forests
Chapter III	- Air Resources
Chapter IV	- Quality Services
Chapter V	- Resource Management Services
Chapter VI	- State Environmental Quality Review
Chapter VII	- Subchapter A
	- Implementation of EQBA of 1972
Chapter X	- Division of Water Resources

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Public Use
Temporary Revocable Permits
Motor Vehicle Use
Timber Management
Unit Management Planning
Pesticides
Prescribed Fire
State Forest Master Plan
Inventory (facility, forest, and wildlife)
Acquisition
Road Construction
Motor Vehicle Access for People with Disabilities Policy
Best Management Practices for water quality (BMP's)