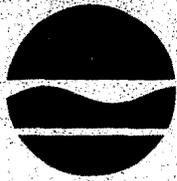


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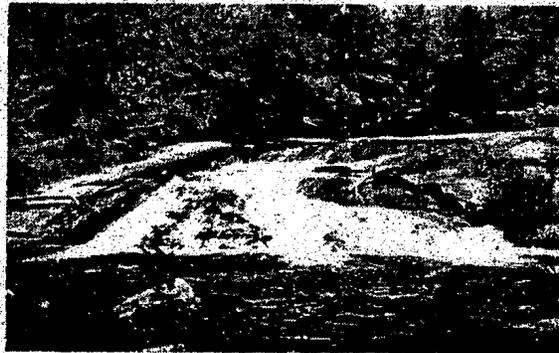


New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Lands and Forests

**Unit Management Plans
for
Black River Wild Forest
Pratt-Northam Memorial Park**

J.P. Lewis Tract Easement
John Brown Tract Easement



June 1996



GEORGE E. PATAKI, *Governor*

MICHAEL D. ZAGATA, *Commissioner*

**MEMORANDUM FROM
MICHAEL D. ZAGATA, *Commissioner***

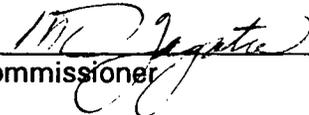
New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

JUN 27 1996

TO: The Record

**RE: Unit Management Plan (UMP)
Black River Wild Forest**

A UMP for the Black River Wild Forest has been completed. The UMP 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 UMP includes management objectives for a five year period and is hereby approved and adopted.



Commissioner

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE v

GENESIS vi

MAP viii

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Area Description

1. General Location and Acreage 1

B. History of Land Unit 3

II. INVENTORY OF RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND PUBLIC USE

A. Natural Resources

1. Physical

 a. **Geology and Soils** 9

 b. **Terrain** 10

 c. **Water** 10

 d. **Wetlands** 11

2. Biological

 a. **Vegetation** 11

 b. **Wildlife** 12

 c. **Fisheries** 14

3. Visual 15

4. Unique Areas and/ or Historical 16

B. Man-Made Facilities

1. Trails and Roads

 a. **Motor Vehicle Roads** 16

 b. **Snowmobile Trails** 17

 c. **Foot Trails** 18

 d. **Nordic Ski Trails** 19

 e. **Horse Trails** 19

 f. **All Terrain Bicycle Trails** 19

 g. **Administrative Truck Trail** 20

2. Other Facilities

 a. **Trailhead Parking Areas** 20

 b. **Registration Booths** 20

 c. **Leantos** 20

 d. **Foot Trail Bridges** 21

 e. **Snowmobile Trail Bridges** 21

 f. **Fire Tower** 21

 g. **Dams** 21

 h. **Signs** 21

 i. **Fish Barrier Dams** 21

 j. **Bar Gates** 21

 k. **Gravel Pits** 22

 l. **North Country Trail** 22

II.	C.	Cultural/ Historical Impact	22
	D.	Economic Impacts	22
	E.	Public Use of Area and Capacity of the Resource to Withstand Use ..	23
III.		<u>MANAGEMENT AND POLICY</u>	
	A.	Past Management	25
	B.	Constraints and Issues Affecting the Planning Area	
		1. <u>Constraints</u>	26
		2. <u>Issues</u>	26
	C.	Management Goals and Objectives	
		1. <u>Land Management</u>	27
		2. <u>Public Use Management</u>	28
		3. <u>Wildlife Management</u>	28
		4. <u>Fisheries Management</u>	29
		5. <u>Water Quality</u>	30
IV.		<u>PROJECTED USE AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSED</u>	
	A.	Facilities Development and Removal	31
	B.	Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Facilities	34
	C.	Public Use Management and Controls	34
	D.	Fish and Wildlife	34
	E.	Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers	36
	F.	Fire Management	37
	G.	Administration	
		1. <u>Staffing</u>	37
		2. <u>Budgeting</u>	38
		3. <u>Education</u>	38
	H.	Problem Areas	
		1. <u>Possible Trespasses</u>	39
		2. <u>Access</u>	39
		3. <u>Land Titles and/or Surveys Needed</u>	39
		4. <u>Environmental Problems</u>	39
	I.	Land Acquisition	40
	J.	State Land Master Plan Amendments Recommended	40

K.	SEQR Requirements	40
L.	Relationship of Unit Management to Forest Preserve and Adjacent Areas	40
M.	Proposed Rules and Regulations	41
V.	<u>PRIORITIES, SCHEDULES AND COSTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS</u>	42
VI.	<u>PRATT-NORTHAM GIFT LANDS AND BANK LOT SUB-PLANS</u>	46
VII.	<u>SUB-PLANS FOR CONSERVATION EASEMENT LANDS</u>	52
VIII.	<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES</u>	57
IX.	<u>APPENDICES</u>	
1.	Unit Location	
	A. Boundary Line Description	59
	B. Adirondack Land Map Location	61
	C. Sections Map	62
2.	Unit History - Blowdown Map	63
3.	Unit Soils and Geology	
	A. Geological History	64
	B. Interpretation for Soils	65
4.	Topographic Map Index	66
5.	Water	
	A. Map - Unit Lakes and Ponds	67
	B. Map - Watersheds	68
	C. Map - Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Classification and Special Interest Areas	69
6.	Map - Wetlands	70
7.	Vegetation	
	A. Covertime Maps	71
	B. Landcover Cotypes	72
	C. Rare Elements List	77
8.	Wildlife	
	A. Map and List of Significant Habitats	78
	B. Breeding Bird Inventory	80
	C. Map - Deer Management and Wildlife Management Unit Boundaries	81
9.	Fisheries	
	A. Pond and Lake Inventory	82
	B. Stream Inventory	83
	C. Fish Species	84

APPENDICES...Continued

10.	Unit Facilities - Inventories	
	A. Sign Inventory	85
	B. Bridge Inventory	88
11.	Unit Facilities - Mapping	
	A. Facilities Map	INSERT
	B. Maps - Trailhead Parking Area	90
	C. Map - Proposed Snowmobile Corridor Trail System	91
	D. Map - Proposed North Country Trail	92
12.	Assessment of Public Comment on the Draft Plan	93
13.	SEQR Documents	96
14.	NYS Constitution, Article XIV	98
15.	Adirondack Park SLMP Wild Forest Classification Description	102
16.	Pratt-Northam Memorial Park Documents	
	A. Permit - North Lake	108
	Permit - South Lake	112
	B. Environmental Conservation Law, Article 9, Section 9-0107 . .	115
	C. Map and Summary of Forest Inventory Data	116
17.	Historical Synopsis - North Lake	118
18.	Map - The Bank Lot	121
19.	Map - Nicks Lake Campground	122
20.	Brochure - North Lake Recreational Easement Lands	123
21.	Adirondack Scenic Railroad Brochure	125

PREFACE

BLACK RIVER WILD FOREST FINAL UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN

NYSDEC

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And the land will remain
essentially unchanged;

A testimony to a different past,
to another time;

A natural citadel of forests,
wetlands, lakes and hills.

And we the people of this great
State can enjoy this heritage;

We can find peace,
and fish and wildlife,
and many other natural values.

We can hike and ride, hunt and fish,
ski and snowshoe, and find the serenity
and the balm of those things wild.

But, the continuance of these things
will require a stewardship that they
may remain in their natural state;

And, if it is properly managed,
the Black River Wild Forest
will be all of these things for our children,
and their children, ad infinitum.

We, and they, will enjoy a true natural
treasure forever, if we manage it wisely;

And, to that end, we set forth today...

David V. Gray, DEC - Herkimer
Task Force Leader

GENESIS

The Forest Preserve, consisting of the public lands in the 16 counties of the Adirondack and Catskill regions of New York State, was created in 1885 and was one of the earliest attempts at land preservation in the United States. The 1885 legislation directed that the Forest Preserve "be forever kept as wild forest lands." In 1892, most of the Forest Preserve lands in the Adirondacks were included in the newly established Adirondack Park. In 1894, an amendment to the New York State Constitution gave further direction that the Forest Preserve lands, "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." This mandate, now Article XIV of the Constitution, applies to both the Adirondack and Catskill Forest Preserves and covers approximately 2.8 million acres of public lands.

Over the years, these enormous tracts of public lands have provided a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities in a wild and forested setting unique to the eastern United States. New York is the only State where citizens have agreed to give constitutional protection to their lands and this protection has endured for over a century.

As with all public lands, use and interest by the public steadily increased to a point which threatened the very values for which the Forest Preserve was established. During the 1950's and 1960's, many studies were made to identify detrimental threats to the Forest Preserve and to offer solutions for the future of these lands. Notable among these studies was the work of the Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks, which was formed in 1968. The Commission was charged with making recommendations for the future use of both State and private lands within the Adirondack Park. Among its important recommendations were:

- the creation of an Adirondack Park Agency;
- the preparation of a master plan for State lands;
- the classification of these lands "according to their characteristics and capacity to withstand use"
- a set of extensive guidelines for the care, custody and control of State lands.

These recommendations were adopted in the 1971 legislation known as the Adirondack Park Agency Act, Article 27 of the Executive Law.

Policy and procedure guidelines, which can be found in the Forest Preserve Unit Management Planning and Procedure Handbook dated April 1, 1988, apply specifically to unit management planning for Forest Preserve lands within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks.

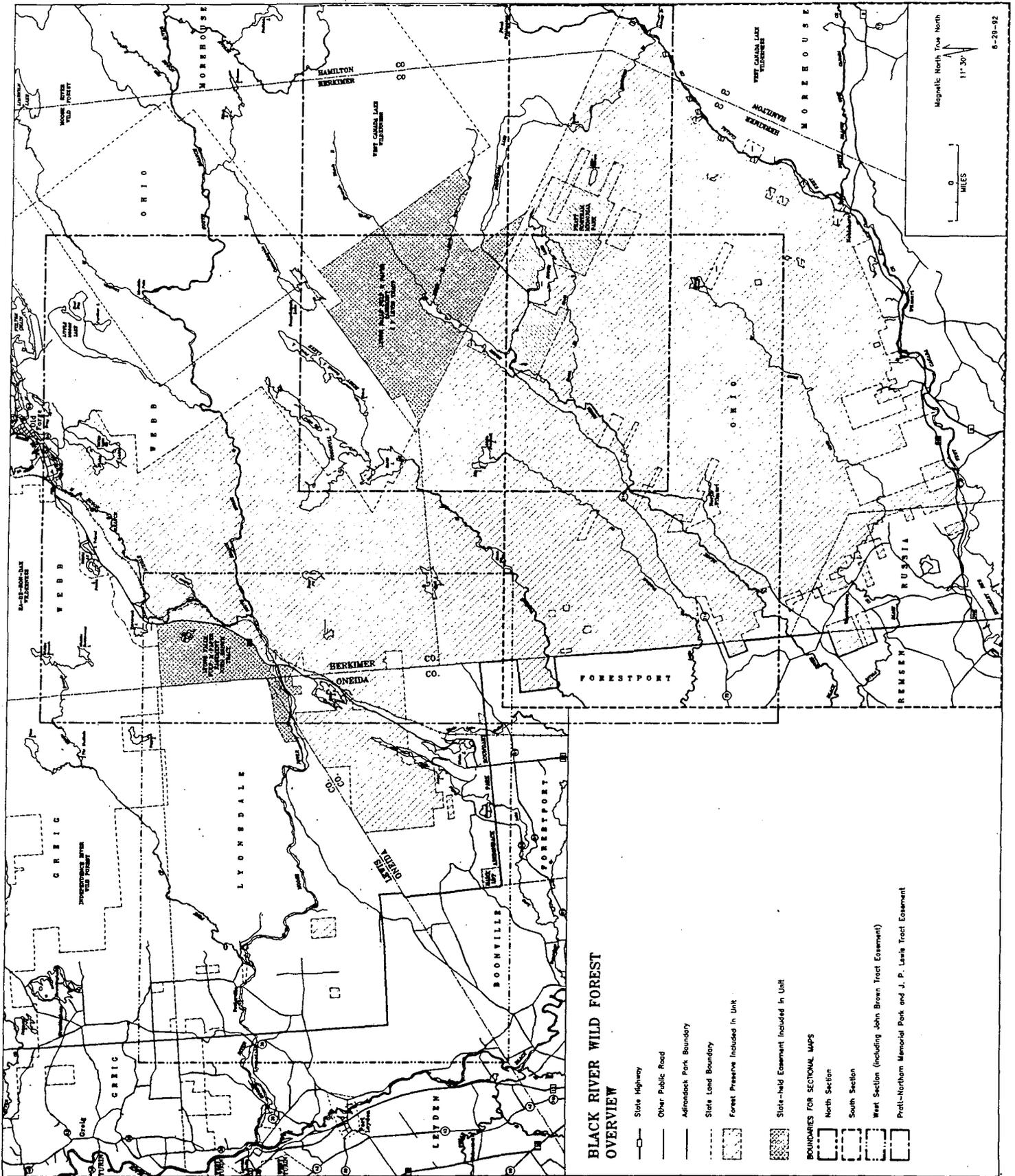
Planning is the orderly arrangement of the means to an end, the detailed formulations of a program of action. Land use planning is the establishment of goals, policies and procedures that prescribe management of an area of land. Unit management planning is the planning process being applied to the various land units of the Forest Preserve. The planning process consists of three levels; State Land Master Plan, Unit Management Plan and Project Plan.

The Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan affects State land management within the Adirondack Park in two key ways:

- Lands are classified according to their characteristics and/or capacity to withstand use. The following land classifications are established in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan:
 - Wilderness ○ Primitive ○ Canoe ○ Wild Forest ○ Intensive Use ○ Historic
 - Travel Corridor ○ State Administrative ○ Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers

- General guidelines and standards provide for the management and use of lands within each classification. Each area of land classified becomes a unit for management purposes and each unit will have a specific management plan written for it. These unit management plans will direct management activities within the unit for a period of five years. Plans may be amended if necessary and will be reevaluated and updated at five year intervals. Within the classification and criteria provided by the State Land Master Plan, a unit plan covers all aspects of the environment and is the basis for all activities within the unit. All management programs must recognize and work within the constraints of the plan. The Black River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan has been prepared by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation with the State Land Master Plan setting the parameters and local citizens providing additional review. Unit management plans will contain sufficient information to comply with all State Land Master Plan requirements.

Unit management plans will be as specific as possible in order to eliminate the need for further public, regulatory or Departmental policy reviews at the project plan stage. Including such specifics in the unit plans will not always be practical and project level reviews will be necessary in many cases. A project plan may be needed to address SEQRA and to implement an action identified in an approved unit management plan. Project planning involves a series of administrative steps or procedures leading to the installation or completion of the approved project action. Depending on the complexity of the project, project planning may be very simplistic involving two or more steps with documentation. More steps are required as the size, impact or cost of a project increases. As these steps are completed, documentation results in a file or record. Project planning does not generally involve public participation except as may be required by the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act. However, on certain projects, public informational meetings may be held. Also, files relevant to most projects are generally available for public review and budget and staffing estimates for most projects will be included in the unit management plan.



This document represents management objectives rather than a work plan of commitments. Accomplishment of the management actions outlined herein is entirely dependent on legislative budget appropriations for project funding and sufficient personnel to carry them out. Where possible, the Department will work with volunteer groups and pursue alternative funding sources to accomplish some of the proposed projects. If specific scheduled projects are not funded in the year budget requests are made, they will be resubmitted in the following year so that important plan management objectives may eventually be realized.

I. **INTRODUCTION**

A. **Area Description**

1. **General Location and Acreage**

The Black River Wild Forest is located in the south-western foothills of the Adirondack Park. Including the detached parcels within the Park boundary, the unit is comprised of Forest Preserve lands in four counties with the following acreage breakdown (excluding Pratt-Northam Memorial Park, 4462.1 acres):

<u>Herkimer County</u>		<u>Acreage</u>
John Brown's Tract (Webb)		5,855
Moose River Tract (Webb)		15,405
Gore between Moose River Tract and Nobleboro Patent (Ohio)		937
Adgate's Eastern Tract:		
Devereux Tract (Webb)	3,992.82	
Blake Lot (Webb)	13,986.00	
Cramer Tract (Webb and Ohio)	6,530.40	
Miller (J. A.) Tract (Ohio)	1,712.42	
Minuse (J. H.) Tract (Ohio)	2,520.00	
Gouverneur (Nicholas) or N. Gouverneur (Webb)	1,766.00	
Kirkland (Ohio)	1,626.00	
Hamilton (Ohio)	825.00	
Jewett (Ohio)	<u>773.00</u>	
	33,731.64	33,732
Woodhull Tract (Ohio)		4,503
Nobleboro Patent (Old Survey) (Ohio)		12,843
Nobleboro Patent (New Survey) (Ohio)		19,461
Remsenburgh Patent Ohio and Russia)		21,127
Matchin's Patent - Marvin Tract (Russia)		<u>100</u>
Herkimer County Total		113,963

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

Lewis County

John Brown's Tract (Lyonsdale)	88
Brantingham Tract, Lot 311 (Lyonsdale)	50
Brantingham Tract, Lot 314 (Lyonsdale)	<u>183</u>
Lewis County Total	321

Hamilton County

Arthurboro Patent (Morehouse)	473
-------------------------------	-----

Oneida County

Adgate's Eastern Tract		
Piquet Tract (Forestport)	2,313.07	
Devereux Tract (Forestport)	984.81	
N. Gouverneur (Forestport)	600.00	
Miller and Swanton (Forestport)	<u>2,009.42</u>	
	5,907.30	5,907
Remsenburgh Patent (Forestport and Remsen)		342
Woodhull Tract (Forestport)		<u>500</u>
Oneida County Total		6,749

Black River Wild Forest Grand Total (Acres) **121,506**

A permanent easement and right-of-way held jointly with Charles A. McHale, his heirs, distributees and assigns, allows motorized access on the existing Bolick Rd. from the Moose River Road to State land in the Miller and Swanton Tract, Adgate's Eastern Tract.

A permanent easement acquired in 1967 from the Trustees of the Masonic Home, allows access from the Round Lake Road to the Otter Lake-Brandy Lake Snowmobile Trail.

The total acreage for the Black River Wild Forest is 121,506 acres. This total does not include the Nicks Lake Campground which is classified as an intensive use area and is treated in a separate management plan prepared by the NYSDEC Division of Operations. See Appendix 1.A. for a boundary line description of this wild forest unit.

Richard Cox and Tony Dinetto have deeded access rights to their property on the South Shore Road at South Lake. Details of an access agreement are currently being worked out between Mr. Cox and NYSDEC regarding specific location.

Due to this large acreage, the unit is divided into four sections for planning purposes. Sections A through D are shown in Appendix 1.C.

Section A - That acreage north of the South Branch Trail and Woodhull Lake.

Section B - That acreage between Section A and the Black River, North Lake and the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park parcel.

Section C - That acreage contained in the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park Parcel. This gift land acreage is addressed in a sub-plan which is appended herein.

Section D - That acreage between Section B and State Routes 8 and 365.

B. History of Land Unit

A comprehensive treatment of the interesting history of this area is not practical here. Consult the Bibliography for a listing of some of the many excellent sources of historical information. Following are some significant highlights:

Historic Note 1.

The Black River, for which this unit is named, has been called the longest of the rivers flowing within the bounds of our great State. Within the Adirondack Park, it drains approximately 80 square miles by dropping 518 feet in 14.4 miles. Unlike other major rivers in New York State, it flows basically south, running from North Lake to the Park boundary. For this reason, the portion of the Black River that lies within the unit did not play a large part in early American history, which was based on an east-west transportation pattern.

Historic Note 2.

The history of the area comprising the Black River Wild Forest is primarily one of lumbering and related industries. Prior to the 19th century, this region was known only as a great "waste land" full of marshes, beavers and otters. As the 1800's began to unfold, lumbering became big business and the virgin forests were indiscriminately cut. Great log drives were common on the Black and Moose Rivers as well as the West Canada Creek. Sawmills and logging hamlets appeared with names like Woodhull, Forestport and Woodgate. Lumber, pulpwood and tannin were the 'spoils of a careless and wanton exploitation of the wilderness'. Alfred L. Donaldson in his 'History of the Adirondacks' wrote; "the march of the lumbermen was like an invading army" and they cut "carelessly, with no concern for the future." No professional foresters cruised and scientifically marked the harvests and only the biggest and best fell because the supply of trees appeared limitless. The law of 1885 was amended in 1894 and the 'Forever Wild' clause of the New York State Constitution brought all harvesting to a stop and the "great abused wilderness" was brought under the Constitutional protection of the Forest Preserve. Timber harvesting on private lands of course, has continued since the State land received constitutional protection. In the early 1940's, increasing prices caused a resurgence of logging activity and over 100,000 cords of spruce and balsam were scheduled to be cut in the West Canada country alone.

Early in this century, the 'City' of Nobleborough was the site of a large dam on the West Canada Creek. The trees on the mountainsides were cut with handsaws, mostly by Finns, Polish and French Canadians. The logs were driven down the West Canada to Nobleboro where they were fed to a de-barking drum prior to shipment to the mill by truck.

McKeever was 'booming' with a veneer mill which, in 1913, was converted to a large sawmill with a double bandsaw and resaws. Forty thousand feet of hardwood logs were

sawn each day exclusive of the hearts, which were used for ties by the New York Central Railroad. A pulpmill also operated at McKeever and there were four grinders in operation when the river was high. An article in the 'Lumber Camp News' of September 1949, cites that one of the largest logs squared thirty inches on the (Moose River Lumber Company's saw) carriage and developed twenty six inch wide lumber, streamlined grain and clean as a hound's tooth." This 42+ inch diameter tree (11 feet in circumference) was one of the many giants that supplied more than twelve million feet of select birch and hard maple to all parts of the country during this century's 'teens'.

Rice Veneers Incorporated purchased the pulpmill at McKeever from the Gould Paper Company in 1949. The veneer produced from birch logs was shipped to New London, Wisconsin where it was processed into flush doors. The mill produced veneer until it closed in 1961.

Historic Note 3.

Chapter 608 of the Laws of 1900 added the Town of Webb in Herkimer County to the Adirondack Park. Although this did not enlarge the Park, it did take into consideration the fact that the Town of Webb had been erected from the Town of Wilmurt on January 25, 1896.

Historic Note 4.

Since ownership by the Crown, the lands comprising the Black River Wild Forest have come into state ownership through an enormous number of acquisitions and legal transactions. Mortgage foreclosures and tax sales, as well as fee purchases were the acquisition methods used since the late 1800's to procure the lands making up the Black River Wild Forest for the People of the State of New York. Numerous deeds starting around 1877 trace the history of the unit as the pieces fall into place like a 121,000 acre jig-saw puzzle. Names out of Adirondack history lace the deed books and title cards which document the physical growth of the area. These names include Gould Paper Company, Iroquois Pulp and Paper Company, Adirondack League Club, Forest Products Corporation, Syphert and Harrig Lumber Company, Finch Chemical Company, Brown (George D.), Ballou, Ostrander, Marsh, Underwood, Coughlin, Scanlon and Webb.

Historic Note 5.

In 1825, then Governor DeWitt Clinton made a suggestion for supplementing the water supply to the Erie Canal. The Black River country was viewed as a needed feeder source for the successful Erie, especially in light of the enlargement being considered at the time for that major east-west connector.

Under the general authority contained in Chapter 157 of the Laws of 1836, Chapter 181 of the Laws of 1851 authorized the Canal Commissioners of the New York State Public Works to cause surveys to be made of the lakes at the head of the Black River for the purpose of creating reservoirs. These reservoirs would supply the Black River and the canal system with sufficient water throughout the year. The act authorized the construction of dams, bulkheads, gates and other utilities on the streams and lakes flowing into the Black above the canal feeder dam. It also authorized the Canal Commissioners to

"employ such numbers of persons as in their judgement may be required to attend the gates on said dams, subject to the approval of the Canal Board." The contract for the construction of the necessary dams was awarded on December 30, 1851. Due to certain legal technicalities, the plans were re-adopted and the work was finally authorized under the provisions of Chapter 329 of the Laws of 1854

Canal lakes on this wild forest unit which were under the jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT), now the NYS Thruway Authority are **North Lake** (constructed in 1857), **South Lake** (1859) and **Woodhull Lake** (1859). **Hinckley Reservoir** (1914 or 1915) and **Sand Lake** (1872) are the remaining "canal lakes" located adjacent to the unit. Chub Pond was initially included, but was abandoned in 1889.

In 1920, the newly-formed Black River Regulating District Board proposed construction of twelve storage reservoirs on the Black River and its tributaries. Most of these were subsequently dropped, some after very bitter legal battles. The Black River's characteristic of too much water in one season and too little in others resulted in the 1925 enlargement of the Stillwater Reservoir on the Beaver River, tributary to the Black. However, proposals to construct new dams at Panther and Higley Mountains, both adjacent to this unit, met with public outcry and defeat. Attempts to regulate and harness the Black River's erratic flow continue to this day.

Management in the North Lake, South Lake section of the unit is particularly complex due to the management inter-relationship between DEC and the Thruway Authority, involving 'canal lands', 'flow lines' etc. In 1967, then responsible NYS Department of Transportation issued a permit to the then NYS Conservation Department for the care and custody of the contiguous uplands and those canal lands underwater in the South Lake Reservoir. Likewise, a DOT permit to DEC dated October 1990, provides for access for undeveloped recreational purposes to North Lake from Forest Preserve and conservation easement lands. These permits can be found in Appendix 16. An historical synopsis of the North Lake area as compiled by former Regional Forestry Manager Scott K. Gray, III can be found in Appendix 17.

Historic Note 6.

On November 25, 1950, the biggest 'wind' of all hit the Adirondacks, leveling trees in scattered locations of the Park from Franklin County to Fulton County. (See Appendix 2). David H. Beetle, writing for the Utica Observer Dispatch of January 22, 1951 illustrated salvage estimates (1,740,000 cords) as "a four foot deep, four foot high pile of pulp logs that would stretch without a break from New York to Los Angeles plus a few miles out into the Pacific". In addition to this, the Department estimated that some 124 million board feet of maple, birch and beech were down. Sixty percent of this volume was located on state land and a portion of this occurred on the Black River Wild Forest.

On the evening of August 27, 1972, another 'big wind' caused extensive blowdown damage to the Woodgate Area. Although the affected Forest Preserve acreage in Herkimer County consisted primarily of hardwood stands and was of minor concern, the opposite was true for nearby Oneida County in the area of the detached parcel (Apps Pond). The blowdown caused by the tornado provided a serious fire danger here due to

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

an abundance of conifers. Steps were taken to reduce the hazard through salvage and clean-up operations.

On July 11, 1984, another tornado-like windstorm severely damaged a strip of the Black River Wild Forest. Beginning in Lot 8 of the Woodhull Tract, Town of Forestport in Oneida County, the damage extended easterly through the Town of Ohio in Herkimer County, along the end of Chub Pond, the southern tip of Little Woodhull Lake, continued between North and South Lakes and terminated on private land along the south shore of Honnedaga Lake. The greatest area that was affected was in a continuous 250 acre swath which averaged 350 feet in width, ran eastward approximately five miles to the hilltops one and one-half miles east of Chub Pond. From that point for an additional nine miles, the degree of damage varied in a hit-and-miss fashion, with patches of up to 20 acres in size where nearly 100 percent windfall existed. This portion accounted for an additional estimated 100 acres.

The above description is in a report from an aerial reconnaissance of the area. An on-ground inspection revealed many individual wind thrown or damaged trees in the area immediately surrounding the mapped area of near-total wind throw.

In the standing timber, immediately surrounding the mapped area, ten randomly located plots were measured as a basis for the following volume estimate of the merchantable sawtimber affected:

Average Sawtimber Volume Damaged - **3812 board feet** per acre - Estimated Breakage - 30% Net Volume Per Acre - **2669 Board Feet** (All Volumes, International 1/4" rule.)

Historic Note 7.

Acquisition by gift of the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park during the 60's was pursuant to Section 9-0107 of Article 9 of the Environmental Conservation Law (see Appendix 16.B.). This purportedly 'non-Forest Preserve' land, along with a number of illegal camps on North and South Lakes which remain from the time prior to State ownership, (see Section IV.H.1.) provide for a very interesting management challenge. Forest Preserve files at the Herkimer office document a number of complications in this location including the area comprising the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park for which a sub-plan is appended herein. Many issues need to be resolved.

Historic Note 8.

In the nineteen thirties, the New York State Conservation Department constructed a number of dirt roads in the Forest Preserve in connection with the C.C.C. camps. These so-called "truck trails" were considered necessary for the protection of the preserve from the hazards of forest fires. One of the "points calculated to aid that purpose" was near McKeever and it still exists today as the McKeever Truck Trail (South Branch Trail for the purposes of this unit management plan). At the time of their creation, "certain conservationists" objected to building these roads and to "opening them to public automobile travel". An Attorney-General opinion in 1935 indicated that the Conservation Commissioner had "the authority, in the exercise of the police power, to make such roads

or trails, as are reasonably necessary and justified to protect the preserve from the hazards of fire". The opinion by Attorney-General John J. Bennett, Jr. further stated that the Commissioner has "the authority and it is your duty to prevent their use as public highways". Unless a vested public right or easement existed prior to the time the State secured title to the land no right can thereafter be secured without constitutional modification.

Historic Note 9.

In the late 1880's, the seven mile Moose River-Minnehaha Railroad (the Peg Leg) brought passengers to Minnehaha where construction of a log and board dam raised the Middle Branch of the Moose River to a navigable depth upstream to the present site of Thendara. At this location adjacent to the Black River Wild Forest, a lock and dam were constructed to impound more water. These two facilities enabled the small steamboat Fawn to make it's daily trip carrying mail and passengers between Minnehaha and the present site of the State Route 28 bridge between Old Forge and Thendara. From that point, passage was by buckboard to Old Forge and the steamers on the Fulton Chain of Lakes.

Historic Note 10.

In the early 1890's, a wealthy businessman by the name of William Seward Webb financed a railroad into the Adirondack wilderness, a part of which borders the Black River Wild Forest. His interest was honed as he bought land for his Nehasane Park and envisioned the value of a rail line running northerly through the Adirondacks from Herkimer. When he was refused a right-of-way by the State, he bought land himself for the route and financed construction of the first main transportation route in the mountains. Construction on the Adirondack Division began in 1890 with service beginning in 1892. Scheduled passenger service was terminated by New York Central in 1965. The 1968 merger of the New York Central and the Pennsylvania Railroad created Penn Central. Under Penn Central's ownership, freight service was continued with decreasing frequency until 1972 when this also stopped. In 1974, the Department of Transportation acquired the Remsen-Lake Placid rail line from Penn Central in order to preserve the right-of-way until the best use could be determined. An agreement in November of 1977 between the Adirondack Railway Corporation and NYSDOT permitted passenger service between Utica and Lake Placid during the 1980 Winter Olympics. Operation began in November, 1979, but the railroad shortly began to experience financial difficulties and safety problems which ultimately resulted in the cancellation of ARC's lease in February of 1981. In the spring of 1992, the Utica & Mohawk Valley Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (NRHS) obtained a permit from the NYS Department of Transportation to operate a four-mile tourist excursion as a celebration of two centennials; the railroad and the Adirondack Park. The Adirondack Railway Preservation Society (ARPS) received another DOT permit for maintenance activities on the Corridor. Public excursions started on July 4, 1992. The operation was conducted largely by volunteers. The NRHS permit ran through the end of November, 1992 with the total season ridership reaching 62,525. In May, the second Adirondack Centennial Railroad year began and this season was also very successful. During Columbus Day weekend, almost 7,000 passengers rode the train, creating a three day weekend record which included a daily record of 2,613 persons. When the season was over, the record was

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

broken...76,841 people had taken the ride to Minnehaha during the second year. In 1994, the Centennial Railroad became the Adirondack Scenic Railroad under the direction of ARPS. Ridership figures for the season totaled a substantial 59,525 passengers. Ridership for 1995 was 53,546 passengers (See Appendix 21.)

II. INVENTORY OF RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND PUBLIC USE

A. Natural Resources

1. Physical

a. Geology and Soils

Geologists explain that the Adirondacks were formed approximately 1100 million years ago during the Precambrian period. (See Appendix 3.A.) Dynamic geological processes such as submergence beneath the sea, sedimentation and crustal sagging, volcanism, metamorphism of pre-existing rocks, deep erosion and re-submergence were all involved in forming the Adirondacks. Intense pressure and high temperatures caused re-crystallization of rock into metamorphic types, including granite, the common bedrock in the area.

During the ice age, approximately one-half million years ago, a moving ice mass ground and scoured the bedrock, eventually shaping the mountains and forming u-shaped grooves or valleys in between. As the ice retreated northward approximately 9000 years ago, it left behind an irregular cover of rock rubble. Sand and stone settled out and formed natural dams as the ice receded and when these filled with melt water, newly-formed lakes and ponds dotted the Adirondack landscape. Since this early structuring of the Adirondacks, vegetation has gradually reclaimed the land and has helped evolve the present forest ecosystems, including the contribution of humus to today's soil structures.

The glacial ice deposited a heterogenous mixture of stone, gravel, sand, silt and clay which is called glacial till. Common minerals include quartz, feldspar, mica and hornblende.

Specifically, the soils in the Black River Wild Forest are represented by four general soil classifications. (See Appendix 3.B.) Over 90 percent of the unit has the very stony Becket, Berkshire and Potsdam as the main soil series. Minor soil areas include (1) Colton and Adams, (2) Naumburg and (3) Colonie, Plymouth and Windsor classifications.

Soil characteristics which must be considered in the management of this wild forest unit include:

- The soils are usually moist, they retain water well, yet they drain freely.
- The soils contain a layer enriched in iron and humus that is strongly acid.
- Over 50 percent of the acreage is very stony.
- The dominant soils have fragipans, very compact and dense layers that form a barrier to roots and water.

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

- Small areas have permeable sub-soils that are suited for a wide range of uses.

b. **Terrain**

Topography on the unit generally rises from west to east and from south to north. (See Appendix 4.) Approximate elevations for the four unit sections are as follows:

SECTION A - Minimum: 1,400 feet above mean sea level (NW corner of Oneida County) - Maximum: 2,360 feet (Woodhull Mountain)

SECTION B - Minimum: 1,350 feet (Black River near the SW boundary) - Maximum: 2,150 feet (Near North Lake)

SECTION C - Minimum: 1,828 feet (North Lake) - Maximum: 2,577 feet (NE section)

SECTION D - Minimum: 1,225 feet Hinckley Reservoir) - Maximum: 2,600 feet (Mountain south of Little Salmon Lake)

This nearly 1,400 foot difference in total elevation generally occurs as gradual, rolling, gentle topography on the greatest portion of the unit, to the south and west. The most impressive relief is found between Nicks Lake and Woodhull Lake (Section A) and northeast of North and South Lakes (Section D) and the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park parcel (Section C). A mosaic of mountains, hills, lakes, ponds, woodlands and wetlands makes this area very interesting and the variety of interspersed ecosystems provides for a diverse unit.

c. **Water**

There is a total of 39 lakes and ponds (two or more acres in size) totaling 37 acres and 41 streams with an approximate total of 129 miles located within the bounds of the Black River Wild Forest. (See Appendix 5.A.) The majority of these waters are part of the Black River watershed and they make a substantial contribution as headwater tributaries to this major New York State river system (See Appendix 5.B.) In the southern portion of the unit, however, there are six water bodies and eight streams which are tributary headwaters of the more southerly Mohawk-Hudson watershed. Two ponds (Hardscrabble, 8 acres and Mud, 6 acres) are located on the J. P. Lewis easement. Gull Lake (13 acres) is located on the John Brown Tract.

Water quality within the Black River Wild Forest is generally satisfactory, except for problems with acidification as indicated by the low pH readings of most of the unit's waters. (See Appendix 9.A.) The problems with acidification are compounded by the water's low productivity and fertility.

This characteristic is typical of the Adirondack region, resulting from its carbonate-poor geology.

The Black River Wild Forest is bounded on the southeast by a portion of the beautiful West Canada Creek. This and other unit streams add interest and variety to this wild forest. Minor waterfalls are located on the Middle Branch of the Moose River near Nelson Lake (Nelson Falls), on the Black River near Reed's Mill and on the South Branch of the Moose, north of the South Branch Trail (Remsen Falls).

d. Wetlands

Significant wetlands on the unit include areas in the vicinities of the Moose River (Middle Branch), Bloodsucker Pond, Bear Creek, Granny Marsh, Chub Pond Inlet, Twin Lakes, Twin Lakes Marsh, Mad Tom Lake and Mill Creek. (See Appendix 6.)

Unit wetlands have been inventoried, mapped and protected under the 1975 New York State Freshwater Wetlands Act by the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Adirondack Park Agency. This inventory was completed in 1984 and is reflected on detailed 7.5 minute inventory sheets for Thendara, Old Forge, Woodgate, McKeever, Bisby Lakes, Honnedaga, N. Wilmurt, Black Creek Lake, Morehouseville, Hinckley and Ohio. The recent APA inventory using the Cowardin National Wetlands Inventory and Classification portrays information useful in describing the wetland cover types and hydrological regimes. This information can be used to assess general wetland values which are also dependent on other information including wildlife use, rare plant species, fish spawning, etc.

2. Biological

a. Vegetation

During the 1800's, the forest coverytype on the Black River Wild Forest was altered by two forces. Logging and fire have both played a role in shaping the area's present forest structure. As in the rest of the Adirondacks, this area was beset by lightning and spark-producing locomotives. The inflammable debris and slash that was left in the wake of logging added sufficient fuel to cause a severe fire hazard. Accordingly, many areas are presently in the early stages of forest succession. These stands contain aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) and white pine (*Pinus strobus*). Sub-climax to climax forest cover consists of a typical Adirondack mix of American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), black cherry and yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) interspersed with red spruce (*Picea rubens*), hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), tamarack (*Larix laricina*) and balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*). The percentage of softwood component increases at lower elevations and along stream banks. Alders, willows and marsh grasses commonly occur in floodplain and swampy areas.

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

Forest covertypes on the unit as identified by the Society of American Foresters are described in Appendix 7.A.

Chub Pond Flow is listed as a significant habitat (#22-013) because of the interesting bog plant Canadian Burnet (*Sanguisorba canadensis*) which has been found there. Other flowering plants which occur on the unit include:

Pink azalea - *Rhododendron nudiflorum*
Canada mayflower - *Maianthemum canadense*
Trout lily - *Erythronium americanum*
Spring beauty - *Claytonia virginica*
Twinflower - *Linnaea borealis*
Yellow clintonia - *Clintonia borealis*
Bunchberry - *Cornus canadensis*
Wakerobin - *Trillium erectum*

Rare plants include Cloud Sedge, Pickering's Reedgrass, Woodland Cudweed, Farwell's Water Milfoil and Pondweed. (See Appendix 7.C.)

b. **Wildlife**

Typical central Adirondack wildlife species inhabit this wild forest unit, presumably at levels consistent with other areas of the park. A listing of mammals on this area is as follows:

Common Wildlife

Black Bear	<i>Ursus americanus</i>
White-tailed deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>
Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>
Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>
Otter	<i>Lutra canadensis</i>
Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>
Mink	<i>Mustela vison</i>
Varying hare	<i>Lepus americanus</i>
Red squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>
Eastern chipmunk	<i>Tamias striatus</i>
Porcupine	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>

Less Common Wildlife

Bobcat	<i>Lynx rufus</i>
Red fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Gray fox	<i>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</i>
Muskrat	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>
Fisher	<i>Martes pennanti</i>

Some of the many species of birds that occur on the area are as follows:

Common Birdlife

Ruffed grouse	Bonasa umbellus
American woodcock	Scolopax minor
Wood duck	Aix sponsa
American black duck	Anas rubripes
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos
Common loon +	Gavia immer
Great blue heron	Ardea herodias

Less Common Birdlife

Gray or Canada jay ++	Perisoreus canadensis
Turkey vulture ++	Cathartes aura
Common raven +	Corvus corax
Osprey *	Pandion haliaetus

Abundance Unknown

Marten	Martes americana
Moose ***	Alces alces
Bald eagle **	Haliaeetus leucocephalus

- + Special concern species - NYS ++ Scarce
- ** Endangered species - NYS and USDI * Threatened
- *** A moose (#6) was reported periodically during the summer of 1990 on or in Woodhull Lake by several different observers.

A map showing the location of the following deer wintering areas will be found in Appendix 8.A.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>
22-142	Black River
22-145	Grindstone Creek
22-146	Oxbow (S. Branch, Moose R.)
22-147	Nicks Creek (S. Branch, Moose R.)
22-148	Nelson Lake
22-151	Granny Marsh
22-152	Gull Lake Outlet
22-153	Little Woodhull Creek - Stone Dam Creek
22-155	Pine Creek
22-156	Black River
22-159	Black River, North Lake Outlet
22-160	South Lake
22-161	Twin Lakes Marsh
22-162	Quagmire Swamp

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

Significant habitat reports indicate that the following are nesting or potential nesting areas for common loons:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>
SW 22-005	Gull Lake
SW 22-017 (P#04-0982)	Woodhull Lake - 1 chick, 1985
<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>
SW 22-018 (P#04-1004)	South Lake - 2 chicks, 1985
SW 22-020 (P#04-1007)	North Lake - 1 chick, 1984
SW 22-023 (P#04-0971)	Chub Pond - 2 chicks each, 1977 and 1985
P#04-0718	Nelson Lake
P#04-0804	Nicks Lake - 1 chick each, 1977 and 1984
P#04-0926	Otter Lake
P#04-0958	White Lake
P#04-0968	Bear Lake
P#04-0981	Sand Lake - 2 chicks, 1979

See Appendix 8.B. for a breeding bird inventory as compiled by D.E.C. and the Federation of N.Y.S. Bird Clubs. Although listed birds are those actually nesting (breeding), additional species use the area during migration and in the winter.

Appendix 8.A. shows the general location of the following significant habitats:

SW 22-004 - Grindstone Creek, Pine marten habitat
SW 22-005 - Gull Lake - Osprey nests

c. **Fisheries**

The waters of the Black River Wild Forest provide a variety of angling opportunities with both coldwater and warmwater species available. The brook trout is the primary game species in most of the unit's waters. The quality of the unit's fishery ranges from fair to excellent. The fisheries resource is supported by a combination of natural spawning and annual stocking of both native and introduced species.

Detailed inventories of the unit's lakes, ponds and streams are found in Appendix 9. These inventories list the waters by name and number and detail water quality, fish species present and fisheries management considerations.

Several lakes in the unit are particularly noteworthy and are identified as follows:

- Nicks Lake - This 154 acre coldwater lake has been the subject of intensive fisheries management activities over the last twenty-five years. This has been prompted by the lake's very high levels of fishing pressure.
- Wild Trout Lakes - Four lakes in the Black River Wild Forest unit are Natural Spawning Adequate (NSA) trout. One of these is Woodhull Lake which, despite its acidic conditions, is NSA lake trout and also supports a remnant lake whitefish population.
- Limed Ponds - Brewer Lake and Round Pond are unit waters which are included in the current D.E.C. Division of Fish and Wildlife Liming Plan. Brewer Lake in Herkimer County is a small 19 acre lake with a good history of providing brook trout fishing opportunity. Thirteen acre Round Pond (located in Oneida County) has also historically provided a good brook trout fishery.

The Black River Wild Forest contains 129 miles of streams. Forty-one streams of significant size are listed in the inventory. (See Appendix 9.B.) Some of these are similar to the lakes and ponds on the unit in that they have been impacted by acid precipitation. Although these streams appear to be good brook trout habitat, they in fact, have seasonal or year-round problems with acidity. Many of the unit's streams support marginal populations of brook trout and provide limited fisheries opportunities.

Bear Creek and Twin Lakes Stream provide the unit's best trout stream fishing opportunities with five to seven inch native brook trout readily available in a remote Adirondack setting. It is believed that both of these streams receive moderate levels of angling pressure.

3. Visual

The Black River Wild Forest is a very large, diverse and interesting unit. It is framed on the north by the Moose River, bounded on the south by the West Canada Creek and cut through the middle by the rough and tumble Black. Water is the basis of much of the unit's aesthetic appeal and the above-named streams provide many pleasing visuals. In addition to the rivers, streams and creeks, the unit is dotted with lakes, ponds, swamps and vlys.

From the lowland flats on the south to the height of ground near scenic North Lake, the unit offers a variety of values based on its woodlands, wetlands and water. Natural beauty can be found from the hardwood forests in the vicinity of Nicks Lake to the wetlands down in the 'West Canada' country. Whether it be the shadowed whites of winter's snow or the lush greens of summer's arbor, this wild forest provides for a variety of recreational opportunity and grand aesthetics.

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

The State Land Master Plan lists the intersection of the West Canada Creek Road (Haskell Road) and State Route 8 at the hamlet of Nobleboro as a Scenic Vista, a potential scenic pull off. This very aesthetic location also has local historic significance as per Section I.B., History of Land Unit.

Three special interest areas (cascades, steep rapids and a gorge with interesting geological formations) and a scenic vista are listed under the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Program as occurring along the Main and Middle branches of the Moose River. A waterfall on the West Canada Creek is also listed as a Special Interest Area. An unnamed hilltop north of Route 8 and the Ohio Gorge affords an excellent panoramic view of lands to the south (See Appendix 5.C.).

4. Unique Areas and/or Historical

With the possible exception of the scenic vistas and the special interest areas identified in the preceding section, there is nothing biologically or aesthetically "unique" on this unit.

Areas of historical interest include the Adirondack Railroad and its trestles, the canal lakes, remnants of the old jackworks at Nobleboro and McKeever, the old Woodhull Mountain fire tower, Atwell Martin's wigwam cabin site, the North Lake 'State House' and the U.S.G.S. bench mark embedded in the cement bridge over Big Brook (1863').

B. Man-Made Facilities

Following is a facilities inventory list for the Black River Wild Forest.

1. Trails and Roads - (See Appendix 11.)

a.	Motor Vehicle Roads	Miles
1.	Wolf Lake Landing Road	4.70
2.	McKeever Road North	.25
3.	Mill Creek Road	3.10
4.	Dam Road	.05
5.	Gull Lake Road	.75
6.	Cohen Road	1.90
7.	Benchmark Road	.30
8.	Dump Road	.10
9.	Apps Road	.20
10.	Bear Creek Road North	.10
11.	Lyons Camp Lot Road	1.40
12.	Flume Trail	.25
13.	Reeds Pond Road (E., W., S.)	.10
14.	River Road	.50
15.	River Road North	.30
16.	Loop Road	1.90
17.	Atwell Road	.20
18.	Lot 79 Road	.60

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

19.	Tin Camp Road	.35
20.	Black Creek Road	1.10
21.	Party Trail	.40
22.	Potter Road	.20
23.	Haskell Road	.50
24.	Herkimer Landing Road	8.00
25.	West Creek Road	5.20
26.	Black Creek Lake Road	5.50
27.	Milk Can Trail	1.50
28.	Vista Road	.40
29.	Nelson Lake Road	<u>.10</u>

Total Mileage of Motor Vehicle Roads **39.15**

b. Snowmobile Trails **Miles**

1.	McKeever-Woodhull-Bear Creek Trail: From McKeever Station, east along the jeep trail to Wolf Lake Landing on Big Woodhull Lake south to Blood-sucker Pond and the Big Woodhull-Sand Lake Falls Trail; west to the Bear Creek Road in Woodgate. (5.7 miles also classified as a motor vehicle road).	9.3
2.	North Lake-Sand Lake-Mill Creek Trail: From the spillwater dam at North Lake to Sand Lake Outlet west to Mill Creek Road.	7.7
3.	Nicks Lake Outlet Trail: From the Iron Bridge Trailhead south to the outlet of Nicks Lake; continuing to the South Branch of the Moose River and the leanto at Remsen Falls.	5.8
4.	Nicks Lake-Nelson Lake Trail: From Nicks Lake Outlet Trail, South to Nelson Lake, continuing to the Middle Branch of the Moose River, north along the river, around Jones Mountain, back to Nicks Lake Outlet Trail.	8.5
5.	Nicks Lake Trail: From Iron Bridge Trailhead in Thendara, southwest to Middle Branch of the Moose River, loops back and crosses the Nicks Lake Outlet Trail, to the Bisby Road.	2.0
6.	Chub Pond-Gull Lake Trail: From the Bear Creek Parking Lot to Gull Lake Outlet and Gull Lake, crosses the Mill Creek Road and returns. Spur trail to the leanto at Gull Lake. (1.1 miles is also a motor vehicle road)	6.0
7.	Chub Pond Trail: From Gull Lake Trail to Chub Pond and leantos.	3.5
8.	Twin Lakes Trail: From Twin Lakes Trailhead east to Twin Lakes.	2.7

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

9.	Otter Lake-Brandy Lake Trail: From the Purgatory Hill Trailhead, westerly to Brandy Lake and the Round Lake Road.	4.0
10.	Brandy Lake-Round Pond-Moose River Trail: From Otter Lake-Brandy Lake Trail, north to Round Pond and the Moose River Road.	2.3
11.	Otter Lake Outlet Trail: From the Otter Lake Outlet off Lakeview Road in Otter Lake to the Otter Lake-Brandy Lake Trail. Spur Trail leads to Route 28 and the Otter Lake Airport.	1.5
12.	Little Woodhull Lake Trail: From the North Lake Road, Town of Ohio, to Little Woodhull Lake and the North Lake-Sand Lake Trail.	4.0
13.	Nobleboro-South Lake Trail: Access from Nobleboro Road, north along the Herkimer Landing Road to Little Salmon Lake. A spur trail leads to the North Lake Road via South Lake. (5.6 miles also classified as a motor vehicle road.)	11.0
14.	Mad Tom Lake Trail: From the Hooper Dooper Road north to Mad Tom Lake, east to the Mill Creek Lake-Black Creek Lake Trail.	14.0
15.	Mill Creek - Black Creek Lake Trail: Access From the Nobleboro Road at Green Clearing, west to Mill Creek Lake to the Mad Tom Lake Trail, north to Black Creek Lake. (5.5 miles also classified as a motor vehicle road.)	<u>7.5</u>

Total Mileage of Snowmobile Trails **79.8**

NET TOTAL (Snowmobile Trails that do not double as Motor Vehicle Roads) **61.9**

c. Foot Trails

1.	Nicks Lake Trail - <u>Yellow</u> - From Nicks Lake Camp-ground parking lot or the Bisby Road to Nicks Lake Outlet to leanto at Remsen Falls on the South Branch of the Moose River to the Middle Branch of the Moose River to Nelson Lake to Bisby Road.	17.0
2.	Chub Pond Trail - <u>Blue</u> - From the Bear Creek Road to Chub Pond leanto.	5.0
3.	Gull Lake Trail - <u>Yellow</u> - From the Chub Pond Trail to Gull Lake leanto.	2.3
4.	Stone Dam-Chub Pond Trail - <u>Yellow</u> - From the North Lake Road in Herkimer County to Stone Dam and the Chub Pond Trail.	5.5
5.	Big Woodhull-Sand Lake Falls Trail - <u>Red</u> - From the South Branch Trail at Remsen Falls to Big Woodhull Lake leanto and Sand Lake Falls leanto.	9.0

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

6.	South Branch Trail - <u>Red</u> - From the parking lot at McKeever along the former truck trail to the vicinity of the Woodhull Mountain Tower.	8.5
7.	McKeever-Bear Lake-Mill Creek Trail - <u>Blue</u> - From the South Branch Trail to Mill Brook.	5.0
8.	Bear Lake-Woodhull Lake Trail - <u>Yellow</u> - From Bear Lake to Bloodsucker Pond and Big Woodhull Lake.	2.5
9.	Brewer Lake Trail - From the Benchmark Road to Lake.	1.2
10.	Floating Bridge Trail - From the floating bridge at the Nicks Lake Public Campground boundary to the Nicks Lake Trail.	<u>.8</u>
Total Mileage of Foot Trails		56.8

d. Nordic Ski Trails

Currently there are no officially designated nordic ski trails on this unit although skiing opportunities do exist. This UMP recommends designation of the South Branch Trail as a nordic ski trail.

e. Horse Trails

McKeever to Big Woodhull Lake - East along the South Branch Trail, south on the Wolf Lake Landing Road. **6.0 miles**

f. All Terrain Bicycle Trails

The following trails are recommended for classification for use by all terrain bicycles (final status may change if any trails are found to be unsuitable):

(1)	South Branch Trail	
(2)	Wolf Lake Landing Road	4.5
(3)	Big Woodhull - Sand Lake Falls Trail	6.0
(4)	Mill Creek Road	3.5
(5)	North Lake - Sand Lake - Mill Creek Trail	4.0
(6)	Loop Road	4.5
(7)	Little Woodhull Snowmobile Trail	4.0
(8)	Gull Lake Snowmobile Trail	4.9
(9)	Chub Pond Snowmobile Trail	3.5
(10)	Twin Lakes Snowmobile Trail	2.7
(11)	Otter Lake - Brandy Lake Snowmobile Trail	4.0
(12)	Brandy Lake - Round Lake - Moose River Trail	2.3
(13)	Nobleboro - South Lake Snowmobile Trail	10.0
(14)	Mad Tom Lake Snowmobile Trail	4.0
(15)	Black Creek Lake Road	3.0
(16)	Nicks Lake-Nelson Lake Snowmobile Trail	8.5

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

(17) Nicks Lake Outlet Snowmobile Trail 5.8

Total Mileage of Recommended Bicycle Trails 80.2

g. Administrative Truck Trail

South Branch Trail - From the parking lot at McKeever along the former truck trail to the vicinity of the Woodhull Mountain Tower. 8.5 miles

2. Other Facilities

a. Trailhead Parking Areas

- (1) Bisby Road (At Nicks Lake) - Foot and snowmobile trail - 6 cars (UTM-N8376, E5011) *
- (2) Iron Bridge (Thendara) - Foot and snow-mobile trail - 6 cars (UTM-N8380, E5002) *
- (3) Nelson Lake (South of Thendara) - Foot trail to the Moose River - 10 cars (UTM-N8326, E4936) *
- (4) McKeever - Foot and jeep trail - 1 ea., 15 and 7 cars (UTM-N8286, E4927 and 4928) *
- (5) Purgatory Hill (Rt. 28 south of Otter Lake) - Snowmobile trail - 5 cars (UTM-N8242, E4895) *
- (6) Bear Creek (Woodgate) - Foot and snowmobile trail - 7 cars (UTM-N8208, E4918) *
- (7) Twin Lakes (N. Wilmurt) - Foot and snowmobile trail - 4 cars (UTM-N8132, E4993) *
- (8) Stone Dam (N. Lake) - Foot trail - 5 cars (UTM-N8113, E4946) *
- (9) South Lake (Honnedaga Road) - Snowmobile trail - 10 cars (UTM-N8180, E5072) *
- (10) Green Clearing (Nobleboro Road) - Snowmobile trail - 4 cars (UTM-N8066, E5080) *

* Universal Transverse Mercator Grid to the nearest 200 meters.

b. Registration Booths (7)

- (1) Twin Lakes Trailhead
- (2) Bear Creek Trailhead
- (3) McKeever Trailhead (E.)
- (4) McKeever Trailhead (W.)
- (5) Bisby Road Trailhead
- (6) Stone Dam Trailhead
- (7) Iron Bridge Trailhead

c. Leantos (6)

- (1) Gull Lake - North shore - privy and fireplace
- (2) Chub Pond - South shore - privy and fireplace

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

- (3) Chub Pond - North shore - privy and fireplace
- (4) Remsen Falls - North of the South Branch of the Moose River - fireplace - privy destroyed
- (5) Big Woodhull Lake - South shore - Leanto is organizational size - privy and fireplace
- (6) Sand Lake Falls - Outlet of Sand Lake - privy and fireplace

d. Foot Trail Bridges (20 - 500')

See Appendix 10.B. for a list of unit foot trail bridges.

e. Snowmobile Trail Bridges (38 - 728')

See Appendix 10.B. for a list of unit snowmobile trail bridges.

f. Fire Tower

Woodhull Mountain - Used as a solar radio transmission repeater station.

g. Dams

North Lake
South Lake

h. Signs

See Appendix 10.A. for an inventory of unit signs.

i. Fish Barrier Dams

Nicks Lake
Brewer Lake

j. Bar Gates

- | | | |
|------|---|---------|
| (1) | Nicks Lake Trail (Thendara) | ID # 10 |
| (2) | Nicks Lake Trail (Lock and Dam) | ID # 11 |
| (3) | Nelson Lake Trail (Bisby Road) | ID # 12 |
| (4) | Nicks Lake Outlet Snowmobile Trail | ID # 13 |
| (5) | Nelson Lake Road | ID # 18 |
| (6) | Gull Lake Trail (Off Bear Creek Road) | ID # 34 |
| (7) | Chub Pond Trail (Off Bear Creek Road) | ID # 33 |
| (8) | Brandy Lake Trail (Route 28) | ID # 36 |
| (9) | McKeever Truck Trail (South Branch Trail) | ID # 41 |
| (10) | Wolf Lake Landing Road | ID # 42 |
| (11) | Otter Lake Dam | ID # 35 |
| (12) | Little Woodhull Trail | ID # 37 |
| (13) | Loop Road | |
| (14) | Brewer Road | |

k. Gravel Pits

South Branch Trail
Flansburg Road

l. North Country Trail

The proposed route for the interstate North Country Trail as it crosses this unit is shown in Appendix 11.D. This unit management plan will be amended if necessary when the final location is determined.

C. **Cultural/ Historical Impact**

Dr. William Seward Webb's "Golden Chariot Route" is quite prevalent in the history of the Adirondacks, including that of the Black River Wild Forest. The rail line was an early inroad to the Adirondacks, an access to the then inaccessible mountains. The main line of the Adirondack Railroad still exists today on the Remsen-Lake Placid Corridor. The branches, stations and sidings although now mostly gone, are still sources of great historical interest. Around the turn of the century, stations were located at Woodgate, White Lake, Otter Lake, McKeever, Nelson Lake, Minnehaha, Onekio and Thendara. In those days, there were also many branches stemming from the main line. The 'iron horse' rode the rails on area sidings and spur lines known as George C. Wood, Utica City Ice, White Lake Sand Pit, Moose River Lumber, the Peg Leg and C. R. Snell. The Hinckley Branch Railroad was surveyed to Northwood, but was only built as far as Gang Mill (Hinckley). Dr. Webb's original plan to operate a railroad all the way to Nobleborough was never realized.

Construction on the Adirondack Division began in 1891 with rail service beginning in 1892. Scheduled passenger service terminated in 1965, but freight service was continued with decreasing frequency until 1972 when this also ceased. Penn Central abandoned the line in 1976, after acquisition by the State of New York in 1975. A subsequent lease to the Adirondack Railway Company which ran the line for the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, remained valid until February, 1981. After 10 years of protracted litigation, the State regained control of the railroad corridor when it was the successful bidder at the line's auction. In 1991, permits were granted for an excursion railroad at Thendara, N.Y., for corridor maintenance, and for snowmobiling. On November 5, 1993, the "NY Central RR Adirondack Division Historic District, Remsen vicinity to Lake Placid" was listed on the State Register of Historic Places by the Commissioner of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 23, 1993. Future activities relating to the Adirondack Railroad and its management are under study.

D. **Economic Impacts**

The economic impact of state ownership on adjacent private lands is minor, although desirable, attributable to an increase in the value of the private lands due to a confidence in future stability of area use.

Although the state does pay full taxes on Forest Preserve lands, there may be some impact on the area's remaining taxpayers. If the land were privately held and

"improved," property taxes on this land would increase, adding to the tax base. State ownership precludes property tax increases based on improvements. However, this state land also does not generate the normal public service demands usually required by improved properties.

The local economy depends, to some extent, on the undeveloped lands in the park of which the Black River Wild Forest is a part. The importance of the big and small game resource for recreational hunting should not be overlooked, especially in this wild forest. Many individuals from outside the region use these State lands for sport hunting and contribute to the economy through local purchases as well as sales and property taxes paid. If not for the resource, there would be no reason to come to the area to hunt, fish or maintain camps.

Private holdings generally produce a slight economic impact on adjacent State lands. Boundary line painting and/or signing and law enforcement costs to combat trespasses which originate on private lands and access trails are necessary. These impacts are basically true for all State lands, but are especially relevant when applied to this large, irregularly shaped unit with its numerous inholdings.

E. Public Use of Area and Capacity of the Resource to Withstand Use

The amount of public use on this unit can best be determined by trail register reports and permit statistics. Trailhead register figures must be considered to be on the low side due to failure of users to take the time to register. The education of the user-public on the importance of registering and the relocation of registers into the interior are possible ways to increase the incidence of registry. In any case, these figures, although not actual, are a general indicator of the amount of public use on the unit and they serve as a guide to the locations of possible areas of high impact.

Records indicate the following data:

Permits - Interior use camping permit totals are as follows: (number of permits/ number of users)

1983	1984	1985	1986
52/415	49/341	69/539	53/441
1987	1988	1989	1990
76/514	90/652	66/371	167/396

The eight year annual average for permits is 78 permits totaling 459 users. The average of 6 persons per permit varies from an actual high of 25 (Boy Scout troop) down to a low of two persons. Permit data also concludes that the highest use is concentrated around the McKeever, Wolf Lake Landing, Woodhull Lake portion of the unit and the Bisby, Nicks Lake area. The heaviest use occurs by hikers and campers in the period from July 1 to mid-September. This is closely followed by hunting pressure during the period from September 15 to December 1. Some permits are granted for the entire hunting season. Records indicate an annual average of 34 permits representing 202 users for periods in excess of one week between mid-September and December (1983-1988) as shown by the following data:

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Permits</u>	<u>No. of Users</u>
1983	31	188
1984	34	186
1985	27	158
1986	32	206
1987	37	216
1988	47	262

Registers - Register totals at the following locations show the number of users as follows:

Register	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	8. Yr Avg.
McKeever	642	748	*693	675	*305	652	655	856	705
Bear Creek	496	563	529	*258	*255	536	571	620	552
Bisby	537	382	336	216	336	*121	522	1367	528
Nicks Lake	120	137	*171	134	*1424	856	952	390	432
Stone Dam	288	272	215	236	*127	373	176	209	238
Twin Lakes	64	126	162	129	*52	126	8	91	101
TOTAL	2147	2228	2106	1648	2499	2564	2884	3533	319

* Partial data - Not all register pages were recovered for this location and time period. Cited annual averages are determined only from periods with complete data.

An examination of these figures indicates that the highest use of the unit occurs from the McKeever trailhead (an average of 705 persons). Remaining trailheads listed in descending order by use are; Bear Creek (552 persons), Bisby (528 persons), Nicks Lake (432 persons), Stone Dam (238 persons) and Twin Lakes (101 persons).

It has been estimated that one-third of the 25,000 campers utilizing the Nicks Lake Campsite per year participate in the lake's fishery. A 1975 aerial survey estimated 29.5 angler trips per acre (or 4,543 trips) for that year. It is believed that the levels of use are even higher today.

There does not appear to be any documented over-use of this highly accessible unit. Based on observations on the ground, the carrying capacity has not been exceeded, although the potential for over-use and consequent degradation does exist for some of the more popular sites on the unit. Any specific areas of public use, fish and/ or wildlife concerns and the need for monitoring and/ or mitigation, will be further discussed in the remaining sections of this plan. Recreational use of this unit can and in fact should, be expanded as mitigation for the decrease of perceived options mandated by the proper management of wilderness areas. Use figures should be updated at the time of plan revision. Current time constraints and lack of personnel do not allow further use figure data analysis to be included in this UMP.

III. MANAGEMENT AND POLICY

A. Past Management

Article 9 of the Environmental Conservation Law mandates the care, custody and control of the State Forest Preserve lands constituting the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Since the turn of the century, management of these lands has consisted primarily of fire protection, forest insect and disease control, law enforcement and administrative decision-making in response to necessity. Early administration of the Forest Preserve related mainly to the solving of on-the-ground problems, to the issuance of various permits, to the upholding of the integrity of constitutional provisions, laws or policies, or to reactions to projects necessitated by facilities needs. In the 1950's, money to fund outdoor recreation was available and recreational management was booming in the form of ample trail and facilities construction and maintenance. Existing trails were maintained to the letter and lean-tos which had previously been constructed under permit, were rebuilt and maintained to a high level. Throughout the 1960's, funding for interior construction and maintenance was sufficient to maintain this level of excellence, but in recent years, shrinking budgets have limited maintenance to, in many cases, less than acceptable standards.

Past wildlife management on the unit has not been specific to the area, but it has been within the general framework of Statewide regulations for setting season lengths, opening dates and bag limits. Surveys have been periodically conducted throughout the Adirondacks to document the population status of various wildlife species and their habitats. Examples are: nest sites for loons, eagles and osprey as well as other significant habitats (i.e. spruce grouse). Fisher, otter, beaver, bobcat and pine marten population data are obtained through pelt tagging. The Breeding Bird Atlas documented the status of all nesting birds throughout New York State.

The 1950 blowdown and subsequent salvage operation opened up the forest and allowed sunlight to reach the forest floor, resulting in a proliferation of vegetative growth within the reach of various wildlife species. The population of white-tailed deer increased dramatically and in 1954 a special Wilderness Area hunt allowed the taking of deer of either sex in certain areas. The Party Permit system was in effect from 1957-1970 and attempted to balance the deer population with the carrying capacity of the winter range. Record buck takes were established until three severe winters (1968-1969, 1969-1970 and 1970-1971) caused massive mortality resulting in a significant decrease in deer numbers. Sportsmen perceived that "doe permits" had caused the crash and legislation was passed in 1970 to prohibit the issuance of antlerless permits in the northern zone.

Ecological zoning is the basis for the current Deer Management Units (DMU's) and Wildlife Management Units (WMU's). The Black River Wild Forest is included in Deer Management Units 25, 28 and 36 and in Wildlife Management Units 23 and 24. (See Appendix 8.C.)

Past fisheries management has consisted mainly of reclamation, stocking, harvest regulation and routine surveys and inventories. Highlights are as follows:

After purchase by New York State in 1961, Nicks Lake was reclaimed in 1967 to remove the lake's large populations of white suckers, golden and common shiners, sunfish and bullhead. These species were competing with the brook trout population and interfering with the trout's growth and survival. The reclamation project resulted in several years of good brook trout fishing. In 1971, after yellow perch and rock bass were detected in the lake, a second reclamation was planned in 1972. As with the first reclamation, this treatment was followed by a period of good trout fishing until the numbers of rough species built up again. The lake was reclaimed a third time in 1978. The quality of the fishery is presently holding up despite the reappearance of sizable numbers of non-trout species. Although they compete with the brook trout for food, habitat, etc., it is felt that these non-trout species provide additional fishing opportunities for anglers on the lake.

Brewer Lake was limed in 1979, but a laboratory check in August, 1987 found the lake's pH to be critical at 5.19. Brewer was re-limed in March of 1988 and again in February, 1991 to maintain water quality suitable for brook trout survival. Similarly, Round Pond was also re-limed in both 1988 and 1991.

B. Constraints and Issues Affecting the Planning Area

1. Constraints

Following are sources of constraints that must be considered in the management of the Black River Wild Forest:

- a. Section One of Article XIV of the New York State Constitution (See Appendix 14).
- b. The Environmental Conservation Law and the Official Compilation Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York.
- c. Various Forest Preserve Policies approved by D.E.C.
- d. Wild forest guidelines as set forth in the Adirondack State Land Master Plan (SLMP) prepared by the Adirondack Park Agency, in consultation with D.E.C. (See Appendix 15)
- e. Significant habitats and/or unique ecosystems.
- f. This unit management plan is subject to requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act of 1975. Appropriate documents will be found in Appendix 13. Some of the projects proposed in this plan may require preparation of individual environmental impact statements prior to their implementation.
- g. The prohibition on the issuance of deer management unit permits within the Northern Zone contributes to an inadequate harvest of female deer. This constraint has impacted forest regeneration as white-tailed deer devour seedlings and vegetation.

2. Issues

The issues that need to be considered and addressed will be treated in detail in Section IV., Projected Use and Management Proposed. Basic issues on the unit involve the degree and location of specific projects to allow appropriate recrea-

tional opportunity on this wild forest unit which heretofore has received minimal public use.

Illegal ATV use and redirection of this use to currently open motor vehicle roads needs to be considered in this plan as well as the designation of a trail system for all terrain bicycles. Better utilization of existing facilities will be considered and in some cases, this will require the closure of superfluous trails so that only those facilities which offer exceptional opportunity for public recreation will be retained. Budgeting for the maintenance of facilities in the Forest Preserve is becoming increasingly difficult and unit management plans should recommend retention of only those facilities which offer optimum recreational potential to the People of the State of New York.

C. Management Goals and Objectives

By State Land Master Plan definition, a wild forest is an area where the resources permit a somewhat higher degree of human use than in wilderness, primitive or canoe areas. The Master Plan states that, because wild forest areas are generally less fragile, they can withstand more human impact. It follows then, that wild forest units should be managed in a manner that will induce future use of the Adirondack Park in their direction.

Commensurate with this, three basic management goals for the Black River Wild Forest come into focus:

- To sustain and protect the natural wild forest setting and to perpetuate and enhance the native flora and fauna at population levels compatible with their environment.
- To fully support any research to determine the causes of forest decline and/or any other environmental degradation on the unit and the Adirondack Park of which it is a part.
- To provide for a variety of recreational opportunities which offer substantial and relevant benefits to the People of the State of New York and to promote the unit's recreational potential in a manner that is consistent with the wild forest setting, SLMP guidelines and Forest Preserve policy.

Specific management objectives for the Black River Wild Forest are listed by management category as follows:

1. Land Management

The objectives in land use management that will support the goal of sustaining and protecting the unit's natural wild forest character are as follows:

- a. To continue those custodial functions necessary for the support of public ownership by developing comprehensive annual work plans for the systematic maintenance of unit facilities.
- b. To maintain the present staff of one associate forester, one senior forester, three conservation officers and three forest rangers as the minimum necessary staff to effectively handle the care, control and custody of the unit. Fish and Wildlife and Operations support staffing must be maintained

at an adequate level to be able to initiate and complete the necessary unit projects.

- c. To provide an aggressive land acquisition program for the purchase (either in fee or easement) of key parcels that provide access, consolidate the unit, or enhance recreational opportunity.

2. Public Use Management

The goal in public use management is to provide for varied recreational opportunities consistent with the unit's wild forest classification. The objectives are as follows:

- a. To promote appropriate public use of the Black River Wild Forest in accordance with all laws, SLMP guidelines and rules and regulations including enforcement of the permit system.
- b. To continue an active educational program to teach low-impact camping techniques to the user-public while stressing that they carry out what they carry in. An active publicity effort is also needed to teach the values, limitations and opportunities available on the unit. The Nicks Lake Campground Interpretive Program is invaluable to this end and should be retained. Also, the distribution of updated pamphlets, brochures and maps is essential and should be given the highest budgetary consideration.
- c. To keep all unit facilities at a high level of maintenance. Presently, these facilities include 38 miles of motor vehicle roads, nearly 62 miles of snowmobile trails, approximately 57 miles of foot trails, the six mile McKeever Horse Trail, 11 trailhead parking areas, seven registration booths, six leantos, 66 bridges, two fish barrier dams and 13 bar gates. All road and trail systems will be kept in a visible and safe condition. Adequate trailhead parking and signing will be provided with appropriate maintenance and policing from the operations unit.
- d. To identify and maintain existing informal camping sites and to designate sites when this is necessary to protect the environment.

3. Wildlife Management

This large and diverse unit has many wildlife habitats and the wild forest would rival some wilderness areas for scientific value. It lends itself well as a laboratory for the study of various ecosystems and the variety of creatures that inhabit these wild environments, especially endangered, threatened and special concern species. At the same time, the wild forest classification allows a greater flexibility for management of the wildlife on the unit including many species which denote, or are interpreted by the public, as being 'wilderness' species.

Wildlife management goals are mandated by the Environmental Conservation Law and deal with the perpetuation and enhancement of indigenous wildlife and with providing the optimum opportunity for the public's enjoyment and beneficial utilization of the resource, including rare, endangered and special concern species.

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

Wildlife management objectives to accomplish these goals are listed by priority as follows (* Ongoing Division of Fish and Wildlife projects);

- a. * To inventory unit wildlife species, including endangered, threatened and special concern wildlife species.
- b. * To inventory additional significant habitats, unusual communities and heritage program flora and fauna.
- c. * To determine the effects of acid rain on aquatic mammals.
- d. * To determine the presence and numbers of pine marten and moose on the unit. As more data on telemetered moose becomes available, the Bureau of Wildlife will be able to determine if moose are present and/or what constitutes prime moose habitat and to identify such on this unit.
- e. * To increase the harvest of white-tailed deer and black bear in the Northern Zone.
- f. To increase trapper participation rate and harvest of selected furbearer species by promoting trapping as a legitimate and traditional recreational activity in this unit.

Specific projects to accomplish wildlife goals and objectives will be found in Section V.

4. Fisheries Management

The fisheries management goals for this unit are to perpetuate native fish in the Adirondack environment and to maintain a high quality fishing experience by developing the capabilities of all appropriate unit waters to provide angling diversity. The objectives to attain these goals are as follows:

- a. To maintain resource inventories for the ponds, lakes and streams on the unit.
- b. To preserve and enhance the native fish species within the unit by the application of sound management policies.
- c. To reclaim and/or stock unit waters where necessary to maintain the fishery and preserve or increase selected stocks of fish, (e.g. heritage strain brook trout) per existing DEC policy.
- d. To impose necessary season and creel limit regulations.
- e. To maintain satisfactory pH levels in selected waters for optimum fishery development consistent with DEC Liming policy and the Pond Liming Environmental Impact Statement.¹
- f. To provide optimum opportunity for the enjoyment and use of the fishery resource by the public as outlined in "A Comprehensive Outline for Fisheries Management in the Adirondack Zone" (Pfeiffer, 1979).

Specific projects to accomplish fisheries goals and objectives will be found in Section V.

¹ Simonin, H. 1990. Final Generic EIS on the NYSDEC Program of Liming Selective Acidified Waters.

5. Water Quality

The goals in water quality management are to maintain productive environments within the Black River Wild Forest as suitable habitat for fish, to protect critical habitat elements that are essential to the maintenance of fish populations and to preserve unit aquatic environments in a natural state. Objectives to accomplish these goals will strive to control and minimize those activities of man that cause erosion and sedimentation of unit waters. Existing environmental impacts will be mitigated wherever possible within the constraints of applicable rules, regulations and policies.

In particular, efforts aimed at reducing the level of polluting emissions at their source will be supported as the single most effective strategy to overcome the atmospheric acidification problem within this wild forest unit. In the interim, mitigation of air pollution-related acidification impacts by liming of selected waters within the Black River Wild Forest (See Appendix 9.A., Lake and Pond Inventory) will be carried out consistent with DEC Policy and the Pond Liming EIS.

IV. PROJECTED USE AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSED

It is expected that public use of the Black River Wild Forest will not increase substantially without an expansion of the public education process. A deliberate attempt should be made to defer use from the more popular, overused areas in this section of the Forest Preserve to areas on this wild forest which receive little use.

Specific management recommendations for the five year planning period of this unit, are as follows:

A. **Facilities Development and Removal**

1. Designate the South Branch Trail as a nordic ski and bicycle trail from the parking lot at McKeever to Raven Run - 5.0 miles.
2. The Wolf Lake Landing Road will be repaired and upgraded to provide appropriate access by **registered** motor vehicles of less than 1500 pounds, excepting motorcycles and trail-bikes, which will not be allowed. Snowmobile trail grooming will continue under temporary revocable permit. "Limited motor vehicle access" via the Wolf Lake Landing Road by other registered motor vehicles excepting motorcycles and trail-bikes, will be allowed by permit only. This will provide for a "semi-wilderness Forest Preserve experience" to those including the handicapped, who are otherwise unable to enjoy a visit with a degree of solitude. There should be a few places where those persons not able to walk into the interior can enjoy a "semi-wilderness quality" experience. Controlling motorized access by permit can provide for a degree of solitude, while allowing a limited number of people, to prevent degradation in the quality of the experience they seek. It will also allow for the continuance of historic hunting by permit in the area. Use of the road by NYS registered vehicles on a permit-only basis, to "haul gear in and out", will be allowed for one occurrence (two maximum) at both the beginning and end of the hunting season. Present illegal access by unregistered vehicles from the trailhead parking area will not be permitted. No motorized travel of any kind will be allowed during "mud-season". An appropriate gate will be erected at the beginning of the Wolf Lake Landing Road.
3. Construct a leanto at the inlet of Bear Lake, another of the Region's NSA Trout lakes.
4. A parking lot in the existing area at Otter Lake will be designed to provide parking for three cars to be used for day use cartop boat launching only. The road to the lake will be gated and a key will be furnished to the Otter Lake Campowner's Association and the Otter Lake Fire Department. Rules and regulations signs will be posted.
5. A multipurpose snowmobile, bike and hiking trail will be located from the Cohen Road east of the railroad corridor, to the southern end of the Otter Lake Airport, using mostly old skid roads (total 1.25 miles.) The proposed trail would provide total State land access to services in Otter Lake without having to cross NYS Route 28. The Trackside Blazers Snowmobile Club has offered volunteer labor, so development costs to New York State could be minimal. After this phase is completed, a connection between the Dump Road and the Wolf Lake Landing Road is recommended. The implementation and layout of Phase II using the Brewer Lake Road and old existing trails as much as possible will be studied.

6. Long Lake - Over half of Long Lake's shoreline is Forest Preserve. The lake is open to ice fishing, but it gets limited use because of poor access. Develop a five (5) car parking lot at the location presently used for parking on State land at the intersection of the Capron Road and the Long Lake Road. Provide for enforcement when the parking lot is full and additional cars park along the road. Construct a small cartop boat access point on the State land on Long Lake. This will consist only of placement of minor log rip-rap and backfill graveling to assure safety in launching canoes and small car-top boats. The fishing and waterway access site will be protected against trailered-boat launching by the placement of boulders near the road. Initially, three campsites will be designated on the shore per guidelines in the SLMP. Up to three more designated campsites would be allowed in the future if necessary. Camping on the island will not be allowed except under permit from the local Forest Ranger. Layout of a trail to Brandy Lake completely on State land will alleviate public use of private lands. To control use at Brandy Lake, two campsites will be designated.
7. Construct the Round Top Mountain Connector Snowmobile Trail (approximately 2 miles) between the Mill Creek-Black Creek Lake Trail and the Nobleboro-South Lake Trail.
8. Nelson Lake Road - The recently completed Remsen-Lake Placid Corridor Management Plan/EIS states "*while there is rail use of the Corridor, it would not be desirable to create unsafe crossings. The parking area recommended below should not be constructed unless the possibility of rail use is eliminated. If trains are using the Corridor, only rail-based recreation should be considered at this location.*" Access to the Moose River and the Nelson Lake section of the unit should be improved, to provide for the excellent canoeing which the area offers and to provide better ingress to the Nicks Lake-Nelson Lake snowmobile and foot trail systems. Access could be provided by rail if tourist/recreational rail options develop. If rail use of the Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor does not occur at this location, this management plan should be amended to recommend extension and improvement of the Nelson Lake Road (approximately .3 mile from Route 28.) and the establishment of a new ten (10) car parking area in the old pit just across the railroad tracks near the Moose River.
9. Construct a leanto on the northeast end of Nelson Lake. When the leanto is built, that portion of the Nicks Lake-Nelson Lake snowmobile trail between the intersection of the Nicks Lake Trail and the leanto will be designated a combined snowmobile-foot trail.
10. Rehabilitate the Nicks Lake Trail trailhead parking area on the Bisby Road to accommodate ten (10) vehicles.
11. Maintain the Mill Creek Road from the Bear Creek parking area to the vicinity of Mill Brook, and construct a five (5) car parking lot at the terminus. Due to unfavorable terrain, large shot rock will be placed at the entrance to the Gull Lake Road to prevent access by motorized vehicles over 1500 pounds.
12. Construct a 10 car parking lot in the existing open area on the Flansburg Road, as required by the deed.
13. Develop a 5 car parking lot at the end of the Vista Road. Lay out a foot trail to connect the parking lot with the scenic vista.
14. Construct additional parking areas on the easements in the Miller and Swanton Tract. The parking lot located north of the Round Lake Road will have a seven

- (7) car capacity. The parking lot within the easement south of the Moose River Road will be a ten (10) car lot.
15. The existing 5 car parking lot on the North Lake Road (Stone Dam - Chub Pond trailhead) will be monitored for adequacy and it will be enlarged accordingly if necessary.
 16. Construct the access road to the Miller & Swanton Tract portion of the unit.
 17. The Remsen-Lake Placid Corridor Management Plan/EIS states that "specific recreational opportunities, in addition to hunting and fishing, between Remsen and Lake Placid that could benefit from rail access are numerous. The possibility exists for expansion of the existing Adirondack Scenic Railroad in both directions. Timing with scheduled trains could offer unique possibilities for controlled camping and point to point or loop trip canoeing, biking and hiking. Ticket sales would offer a means to regulate any current or future overuse situations." These options as listed below are deemed valid in this Black River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan.
 - a. **Granny Marsh** (hiking, interpretive opportunity) - approx. 2 1/2 miles, currently bushwack (Cohen Rd.)
 - b. **Brewer Lake** (hiking, fishing) - trail to Brewer Lake - approx. 2 miles.
 - c. **McKeever Trail** (hiking, bicycling) - Old McKeever Truck Trail (South Branch Trail) provides access to several miles of hiking opportunities, including Remsen Falls on the South Branch Moose River.
 - d. **Nicks Lake-Nelson Lake Trail Complex** (hiking, canoeing, camping, Nicks Lake Campsite - See number 7. above.) - Several miles of loop trail hiking opportunities on the Nicks Lake - Nelson Lake snowmobile and foot trail systems per above. A short bushwack north of the Iron Bridge would need layout and construction. An extension of the existing Adirondack Scenic Railroad permit to include the Nelson Lake-Nicks Lake area of the Black River Wild Forest and the Nicks Lake Campground is imminently possible.
 - e. **Lock 'N Dam** - PRIVATE (Historic and Forest Preserve interpretive site, possible day use picnic area) - Local historic site is immediately adjacent to the Corridor across the Moose River from the Black River Wild Forest.
 - f. **Big Otter Trail** (Equestrian, hiking, camping) Recommendations in the Ha-De-Ron-Dah Wilderness Revised Unit Management Plan per above regarding expanded horse trail connections might provide opportunity for linking with the Black River Wild Forest.

The net change to motor vehicle and snowmobile trail mileages is as follows;

Total Original Motor Vehicle Road Mileage	39.1
Total Motor Vehicle Mileage Proposed	39.1
Total Original Snowmobile Trail Mileage	61.9
Total Snowmobile Mileage Proposed	65.1

Mitigation for the increase of 3.2 miles of snowmobile trails on this wild forest unit is in the closure of 8 miles of snowmobile trails in the Ha-De-Ron-Dah Wilderness.

B. Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Facilities

1. Brewer Lake - This Lake has a history of providing good Brook Trout fishing. Add the trail to this good fisheries lake to the list of maintained foot trails. Provide for administrative vehicular access as necessary for fisheries purposes (stocking, etc.)
2. Twin Lakes - On the old trail connecting the North Lake Road to Twin Lakes from the north, replace the old snowmobile bridge with a foot trail bridge. Mark the additional foot trail to Twin Lakes to connect with the west portion of the Twin Lakes Trail that goes to the Farr Road.
3. Fix bridges and install where needed on all marked snowmobile trails.
4. Add existing trailhead parking areas in the vicinity of Nobleboro to the active regional inventory list and maintain accordingly.
5. Rehab the present bridge over Nicks Lake Inlet (the floating bridge) and walkway.

C. Public Use Management and Controls

1. Change the South Branch Horse Trail into a loop trail by continuing it southerly along the snowmobile trail to the Mill Creek Road.
2. Terminate the Nicks Lake Outlet snowmobile trail before the Remsen Falls Leanto by looping over towards the Nicks Lake-Nelson Lake Snowmobile Trail.
3. Explore, with the Town of Webb, the possibility of connecting their snowmobile trail (#2) which runs parallel to NYS Route 28, with the Nelson Lake Trail System utilizing existing woods roads.
4. Complete a boundary line survey for the Black Creek Lake exception.
5. Determine the best route for the OPRHP Main Corridor snowmobile trail on the unit. This unit management plan endorses the NYSDOT proposal regarding the addition of a recreational trail separated from the roadway on the proposed Nobleboro bridge. Following completion of the planned bridge and recreation trail, construct a connector trail between the unit and the trail system in the Ferris Lake Wild Forest in concordance with the Ferris Lake Wild Forest Unit Management Plan.
6. Provide for more public accessibility to the McKeever, Bear Lake, Mill Creek, Gull Lake and Chub Pond area. Where seasonal road damage will occur, install gates to open and close the section as is done at the Moose River Plains recreation area.

D. Fish and Wildlife

1. Fisheries

The following activities are necessary to maintain the fishery resource:

- a. The annual stocking of trout in the following waters;
 - (1) Nicks Lake (rainbow trout, brown trout)
 - (2) Round Pond (brook trout)
 - (3) Brandy Lake (brook trout)
 - (4) Brewer Lake (brook trout)
 - (5) Moose River, Middle Branch (brook trout)

- b. Conduct biological surveys;
A comprehensive, region-wide effort conducted by the Adirondack Lakes Survey Corporation (ALSC) between the years 1984 and 1987 provided up-to-date biological, chemical and physical data for more 1,600 Adirondack waters, including several in the Black River Wild Forest. Routine survey and inventory activities carried out by Regional personnel will add to and update the ALSC data. These activities include annual water chemistry monitoring of limed waters, pre and post liming and reclamation surveys and annual stocking policy checks. A water by water schedule for these various surveys is not available at this time. The intensity of the survey work will be limited, or enhanced, by levels of funding and staff time availability.
- c. Liming;
Round Pond and Brewer Lake are presently on the Regional list for liming. A survey will be done annually to monitor the water quality of these ponds. It is anticipated that both of these waters will need to be re-limed in 1995 as needed per EIS. Annual post-liming surveys, currently being conducted on both ponds, will continue to be done following the projected re-limings.
- d. Zebra Mussels;
Part of DEC's role for managing response to zebra mussel introduction is to provide public information and biological expertise relating to the mollusk's occurrence, ecology, and control strategies. The waters of the Adirondacks are considered to be at minimal risk of significant zebra mussel infestation due to inherently low pH and nutrient levels. As a precaution however, fisheries personnel suggest placement of an educational sign (including zebra mussel, water chestnut, and Eurasian milfoil) at the access point to Little Long Lake and other areas where necessary.
- e. Helicopter Staging Area;
The Department currently uses State property at Atwell (southwest end of North Lake) as a helicopter staging area for applying lime to Horn Lake. Horn Lake, located in the nearby West Canada Lakes Wilderness Area, is the source water for a heritage strain of Adirondack brook trout of the same name. Maintaining the pH at satisfactory levels is required to protect this self-sustaining population. This project is a high priority with the Bureau of Fisheries. Liming is accomplished via the NYS helicopter fitted with a custom bucket delivery system. Horn Lake has been treated every three or four years for the past two decades. The activity requires an area removed from major highway corridors and properly located for safe helicopter landing and take-off with loads of lime. The site must also be easily accessible by truck for three or four days during the fall or winter. The site at Atwell meets these requirements.

An alternative site, located on the J.P. Lewis Tract has recently been identified. This site lies on the northeast end of North Lake, significantly closer to Horn Lake than the Atwell site. Using this site as a staging area would substantially shorten the time and cost of the Horn Lake lime treatments. Approval to use this site is being pursued with Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper.

2. **Wildlife**

There are no special strategies for wildlife management on Forest Preserve lands. Article 14 precludes doing any wildlife habitat management or manipulation of vegetation involving the cutting of trees. Improvements in forest fire suppression have resulted in a maturing climax forest with a reduced carrying capacity for many wildlife species.

Wildlife management activities associated with the Black River Wild Forest have been passive in nature and have been in accordance with statewide regulations for the Northern Zone. Ecological zones are the basis for the wildlife management units (WMU's) and deer management units (DMU's) as shown in Appendix 8.C. Future management objectives for the Black River Wild Forest will be in accordance with the appropriate WMU's & DMU's for the general area. Unless another blow-down or major forest fire occurs, Forest Preserve land in the Adirondacks will be limited to climax forest species and wildlife management activities will be limited to monitoring various species and populations.

Increased recreational hunting opportunity and better utilization of big game species (deer and bear) can be achieved within the Black River Wild Forest through increased or improved access discussed elsewhere in this plan. A second deer for successful muzzle-loaders took effect in 1991 and will provide an incentive to attract additional deer hunters from the southern zone.

The wilderness nature of the Adirondacks with more difficult access contributes to a deer population consisting of older-aged animals. These older trophy bucks provide a unique hunting experience for traditional deer camp owners and non-residents desiring to hunt big game where there is less opportunity to encounter other hunters. The ethic of the Adirondack deer camp tradition will continue in the northern zone as long as there is access to the resource.

Black bear have always been under-utilized in the Northern Zone. It is an objective of the Bureau of Wildlife to maintain an adequate harvest of black bears to keep an ecological balance in harmony with man. The Black River Wild Forest provides an excellent opportunity for non-residents to hunt bear in the northern zone.

E. **Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers**

Unit rivers are listed and classified under the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act, Title XV of the Environmental Conservation Law as follows:

Black River - The Black River flows through the middle of the unit and is classified scenic from the park boundary to Reed's Mill (Farr Road intersection). The remaining portion from Reed's Mill to Atwell (North Lake), is classified recreational.

West Canada Creek - That portion of the West Canada Creek immediately adjacent to the unit is classified scenic. The State Route 8 intersection with the West Canada is the

division point between this scenic designation to the north and the recreational classification to the south.

Moose River - The Main, Middle and South Branches of the Moose River are located in the northern extremity of the unit. The Middle Branch of the Moose River is classified recreational from its confluence with the North Branch (the bridge between Old Forge and Thendara) to the confluence with the South Branch. The South and Main Branches are classified scenic.

Guidelines for the various river classifications are specified in the State Land Master Plan and will be the standard for management decisions regarding rivers. The recommended corridor width for these rivers is one-quarter mile from each bank when bounded by either State or private land.

F. **Fire Management**

D.E.C. is charged with fire protection on the Black River Wild Forest under the provisions of Article 9 of the Environmental Conservation Law. Responsibility for fire prevention and suppression is divided between three ranger districts. Presently, those rangers are located at Old Forge, Otter Lake and Nobleboro. These ranger districts are all assigned to the Ranger Lieutenant in the Herkimer sub-office.

The Rondaxe Tower is one of only four fire towers to remain standing in Region 6, and it should be retained for the public relations/recreational value that it provides. Present access to the unit is sufficient for fire control purposes.

G. **Administration**

1. Staffing

Presently, the Associate Forester in the Herkimer office has one Senior Forester delegated to handle both unit management planning and everyday Forest Preserve management activities including Forest Preserve land acquisition, unit management plan implementation, coordination and updating as well as public education. This is insufficient for adequate management of the Forest Preserve in the sub-region. An additional forester item is needed at the Herkimer sub-office.

The current forest ranger staff of one Ranger Lieutenant and three forest ranger districts is the absolute minimum necessary to adequately control public use, fire pre-suppression and suppression and environmental impact monitoring on the Black River Wild Forest. An additional Assistant Forest Ranger is needed to adequately control public use problems on the Black River Wild Forest.

Current staffing in the Division of Operations is inadequate. Additional personnel will be required to effect the minimal necessary projects recommended by this unit management plan.

-|- **Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan** -|-

It is important that existing regional Division of Fish and Wildlife technical staff be kept at current levels. These levels are adequate if short deadlines are not imposed. Staff items lost over the years through attrition must be restored.

Environmental Conservation Officers that have jurisdiction in the Black River Unit are stationed at Old Forge and White Lake. This staffing is the minimum needed for adequate control at the present time.

2. Budgeting

The Herkimer Sub-Office will budget for staff and for the maintenance of facilities, as needed to support the various projects on this unit. A budgeting effort will be made by the Division of Lands and Forests in cooperation with the Division of Operations.

The Herkimer Operations unit will prepare a budget request for both permanent and seasonal maintenance personnel. This budgeting effort should also address the cost of supplies and materials, equipment and other expenditures needed to carry out the perpetual maintenance responsibilities.

Budgeting for routine fish and wildlife management activities, including permanent and seasonal personnel, supplies, materials and travel will be prepared by the appropriate bureau staff, in consultation with the Operations unit as required. New projects are generally approved at the Division level before requests for funding are submitted in the Department budget.

3. Education

Publication of a brochure on the Black River Wild Forest is needed as a tool to increase the public's knowledge of this large, under-utilized wild forest unit. A properly prepared pamphlet will also educate the public on the concept that increased opportunities which are offered by this wild forest unit have a mitigating effect on the restrictions imposed by wilderness designation in adjacent areas. The brochure should include a map, a description of the unit, the importance of registering, safety suggestions including sanitation, giardia and water treatment, brief information on facility locations including trail descriptions and lengths and rules and regulations with emphasis on preventing litter.

The media and magazine articles should be utilized to increase the deer and bear hunter's desire to seek out an Adirondack big game hunting experience in a wilderness-like setting. This is an experience that cannot be obtained in the State's southern zone.

Information on trapping and other sporting opportunities as well as wildlife observation opportunities that exist within this unit should be incorporated into an informational brochure. In many instances, this may be all that is necessary to make the public aware of where the resource is and how to get to it. Perhaps, a general article on unit management plans statewide and the resources available to them would be in order at this time, or in the near future. This could be a joint

venture with input from both the Divisions of Fish and Wildlife and Lands and Forests.

H. Problem Areas

1. Possible Trespasses

- a. North Lake - Town Barn (Adgate's Eastern Tract, Blake Lot);
- b. Knapp (Nobleboro Patent, Lot 1);
- c. Cooper (Nobleboro Patent, Lot 1);
- d. South Lake - Penberthy (Nobleboro Patent, Lot 1);
- e. Illegal ATV use and rutting/erosion of un-maintained roads.

2. Access

Several non-designated access roads cross the unit, some providing ingress and egress to private land. In some cases, access rights are not documented by deeds. In other deeds, access rights are addressed in an unclear manner. Conversely, some access routes to State land cross private property, but public access over those routes was not acquired with the State tract that they lead to. In cases where undesignated roads were not purchased specifically as rights of way, they are not considered to be designated routes for public use.

3. Land Titles and/or Surveys Needed

Land title questions and necessary survey requests are as follows:

- a. Apps Pond - Adgate's Eastern Tract, Miller and Swanton, Lot 6
- b. Private Lot (1/2 acre) - exact location uncertain, possibly Lot 25, Devereux Tract or North Gouverneur Tract, Town of Webb; or Lot 20 of Cramer Tract, Town of Ohio
- c. Lot 11, Minuse Tract (Adgate's Eastern Tract)
- d. Piquet Tract - North line from Round Pond westerly to northwest corner of tract
- e. Vicinity of Big Woodhull Lake - Moose River Tract, Township 1, Lots 71, 84 and 97, south boundary
- f. Black Creek Lake - Nobleboro Patent, western end of Lot 68
- g. Appropriation to clear title - Project 131.A, Adirondack Land Trust

Those inholdings with legal deeded access should be documented for inclusion in the revision of this unit management plan.

4. Environmental Problems

The Black River Wild Forest is the victim of the same environmental maladies as the rest of the Adirondack Park. These include:

- a. Increasing acidity in unit lakes and ponds will continue to decimate these waters until the atmospheric deposition problem is resolved. Until such

time, it will be necessary to monitor the unit fishery and where conditions are worsening, the Division of Fish and Wildlife will need to maintain water quality in accordance with existing Department policy. This will keep unit fisheries at their current levels only, but will not improve the general condition of the fishery.

- b. Tree mortality on the unit is at levels typical to the Adirondack Park and, indeed to a large portion of the northeast in general. Beech Bark Disease and Spruce Decline are clearly having an impact on the forest cover. In some cases, forest decline may be linked to atmospheric deposition, climatic change, increasing air pollution and the accumulation of heavy metals on the forest floor, rather than being the result of insect or disease vectors. Monitoring of all forest health concerns is an ongoing function of the Division of Lands and Forests.

I. Land Acquisition

Land acquisitions will be in accordance with property availability and guidelines within the Open Space Plan. Properties which are offered for sale and will improve access to public facilities, which will consolidate the unit's patchwork structure or which will add biologically, geologically, or historically unique or unusual parcels to this unit should be acquired.

Consideration should be given to acquisition of the land immediately adjacent to the lock and dam and the Remsen-Lake Placid Corridor north of the Middle Branch of the Moose River. This locally historic site is contiguous to existing State land comprising the Black River Wild Forest on the south side of the river .

J. State Land Master Plan Amendments Recommended

None.

K. SEQR Requirements

The State Environmental Quality Review Act is addressed by a Negative Declaration which can be found in Appendix 13.

L. Relationship of Unit Management to Forest Preserve and Adjacent Areas

The Black River Wild Forest is bounded on the east by both the Ferris Lake Wild Forest and the West Canada Lake Wilderness. Common management decisions for these three Forest Preserve units must be in concert.

Proper management of the Black River Unit is directed by two considerations with respect to the adjoining West Canada Lake Wilderness. First, plan recommendations must consider protection of the integrity of the Wilderness unit in the area of proximity. Secondly, projects in the Black River Unit Management Plan should serve to mitigate perceived losses caused by West Canada's wilderness classification. Motorized opportunities are available throughout the unit, offsetting the lack of them in the adjacent West Canada Lake and Ha-De-Ron-Dah Wilderness areas.

Also, management recommendations should complement public use of the adjacent Ferris Lake Wild Forest. This is particularly true with respect to the statewide snowmobile trail plan proposed by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation as well as the proposed North Country Trail. (See Appendices 11.D. and 11.E.)

M. Proposed Rules and Regulations

None.

N. NYSDOT Parking Area

Future planning for the relocation of Route 8 at Nobleboro includes construction of a fishing/recreation access trail and a parking area. These facilities will lie predominantly within the existing NYSDOT Right-of-Way, but the northern portion of the parking area will be located on the unit. This unit management plan supports the use of a small portion of NYSDEC land at this location for the purpose of completing construction of the parking area. NYSDOT intends to construct the parking area under release, not full transfer of jurisdiction and will take maintenance responsibility for the parking area and the entrance driveway.

V. PRIORITIES, SCHEDULES AND COSTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS

Cited costs are estimates for Year I based on 1995 figures. Successive years will need to be adjusted to key in increases due to inflation.

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>RESPONSIBLE DIVISION***</u>	<u>COST</u>
ANNUALLY		
1. Maintenance of foot, horse, nordic ski and snowmobile trails and associated facilities.	(OP)	\$12,000
2. Maintenance and cleanup of unit lean-tos, privies and informal campsites on the unit.	(LF) (OP)	** 4,000
3. Maintenance of parking areas and registration booths.	(OP)	10,000
4. Maintenance of unit bar gates.	(OP)	1,000
5. Assure accurate and legible signing at unit trailheads, along trails and at unit facilities.	(LF)	**
6. Monitor environmental impact on unit waters and facilities.	(LF) (FW)	** **
7. Maintenance of the Woodhull communications tower.	(LF) (OP)	** 500
8. Boundary line maintenance.	(LF)	**
9. Stock trout in the following waters: Nicks Lake Round Pond Brandy Lake Brewer Lake Middle Branch Moose River	(FW)	3,100 387 387 258 387 ¹
10. Survey Brewer Lake and Round Pond annually as part of the DEC Liming Policy. All other productive unit waters should be surveyed on a rotation basis of at least two waters per year. (\$200-300 per day)	(FW)	**
11. Monitor wildlife populations through analysis of harvest data resulting from deer check station, hunter report cards, pelt tagging and harvest surveys. Inventory non-game, endangered, threatened and special concern species as well as significant habitats.	(FW)	**

¹ The portion of the Moose River that occurs on the unit is only a small portion of the river stocked at this cost.

** - Normal Program Funding

*** - Divisions: Lands and Forests (LF); Fish and Wildlife (FW);
Operations (OP); Legal Affairs (LA)

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>	
	<u>DIVISION***</u>	<u>COST</u>
12. Check unit fish barrier dams at Nicks Lake and Brewer Lake and maintain as needed.	(FW) (OP)	** 1,000
13. Budget to retain all Department personnel and hire others as necessary for the proper management of this unit in all divisions as addressed in Section III.G.1., Staffing.	(LF) (OP) (FW)	** ** **
14. Maintain an active acquisition program pursuant to the Open Space Plan to acquire desirable parcels as availability and funding permit.	(LF)	**
15. Complete land title and boundary line surveys and resolve illegal occupancies as quickly as possible.	(LF) (LA)	** **
16. Promote an active educational program stressing wild forest recreation, low-impact camping, etc. Budget for updated pamphlets, brochures and maps.	(LF)	**
YEAR 1		
1. Rehabilitate the Wolf Lake Landing Multiple Use Trail to standards consistent with the existing snowmobile trail policy. This will involve realignment, surfacing, and drainage control.	(OP) (LF)	\$30,000 **
2. Designate camping sites on the south side of Remsen Falls.	(LF)	**
3. Construct the multi-purpose snowmobile, bike and hiking trail from the Cohen Road to the southern end of the Otter Lake Airport.	(LF) (OP)	** 13,500
4. Develop the 5 car Long Lake Road parking area and Long Lake cartop boat access site and designate three campsites on the shoreline.	(LF) (OP)	** 3,500
5. Take appropriate measures for the Flansburg parcel classification, trail designation and construction of 10 car parking lot.	(LF) (OP)	** 15,000
6. Rehabilitate floating bridge and walkway over Nicks Lake Inlet.	(OP)	10,000
7. Determine the Town of Webb's interest in a connecting trail between the Town snowmobile trail system and the State Nelson Lake trail system.	(LF)	**
8. Designate appropriate all terrain Bicycle trails on the unit.	(LF)	**

** - Normal Program Funding

*** - Divisions: Lands and Forests (LF); Fish and Wildlife (FW);
Operations (OP); Legal Affairs (LA)

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>RESPONSIBLE DIVISION***</u>	<u>COST</u>
9. Support NYSDOT regarding inclusion of a recreation lane in future construction of the bridge at Nobleboro.	(LF)	**
10. Fishery surveys of two waters within the unit.	(FW)	1,000
YEAR II		
1. Construct necessary appurtenances to allow access from Rt. 28 near Nelson Lake to the Nicks Lake trail system or integrate access to that system with future rail use on the Remsen-Lake Placid Corridor.	(LF) (OP)	** 3,500
2. Construct a leanto at the inlet of Bear Lake.	(LF) (OP)	** 6,000
3. Construct the Round Top Mountain Connecting Trail.	(LF) (OP)	** 2,000
4. Improve the Brewer Lake Trail to provide appropriate administrative access.	(LF) (OP)	** 5,000
5. Inventory historic unit parking areas that are not on the list of maintained trailheads and list those that should receive annual maintenance.	(LF)	**
6. Fishery surveys of two waters within the unit.	(FW)	1,000
7. Construct the trail from Little Long Lake to Brandy Lake.	(LF) (OP)	** 5,000
8. Construct the access road from Round Lake Road to the Otter Lake-Brandy Lake Snowmobile Trail and provide a 5 car parking lot.	(LF) (OP)	** 40,000
YEAR III		
1. Construct the leanto on Nelson Lake and re-designate appropriate trails.	(LF) (OP)	** 6,000
2. Develop the northern portion of the Twin Lakes foot Trail.	(LF) (OP)	** 4,000
3. Construct and/or maintain trailhead parking areas identified in Year II.	(OP)	1,000
4. Fishery surveys of two waters within the unit.	(FW)	1,000
5. Re-lime Brewer Lake and Round Pond.	(FW)	3,000

** - Normal Program Funding

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Operations (OP); Legal Affairs (LA)

-|- Black River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan -|-

PROJECT **RESPONSIBLE**
DIVISION*** **COST**

6.	Vista Road 5 car parking lot and trail layout to scenic vista.	LF OP	** 10,000
7.	Rehabilitate South Shore Rd. at South Lake and construct a 10 car parking/camping area.	(LF) (OP)	** 50,000
8.	Construct the Otter Lake parking lot near the present gate site.	(LF) (OP)	** 3,000
9.	Enlarge the Bisby Road parking lot.	(LF) (OP)	** 10,000
YEAR IV			
1.	Modify Nicks Lake Outlet snowmobile trail.	(LF) (OP)	** 12,000
2.	Convert South Branch Horse Trail to a loop trail.	(LF) (OP)	** 2,500
3.	Fishery surveys of two waters within the unit.	(FW)	1,000
4.	Rehabilitate parking lots at North and South Lakes (8 cars).	(OP)	10,000
5.	Rehabilitate the Bolick Road, construct a 5 car parking lot at the terminus.	(LF) (OP)	** 10,000
YEAR V			
1.	Construct a 5 car trailhead parking area at the end of the Mill Creek Road and maintain the road for motor vehicles from the Bear Creek Parking Area to the new parking lot.	(LF) (OP)	** 36,000
2.	Block the Gull Lake Road by placing large shot rock at the entrance.	(OP)	1,500
3.	Begin draft revisions for this unit management plan.	(LF)	**
4.	Fishery surveys of two waters within the unit.	(FW)	1,000

** - Normal Program Funding

*** - Divisions: Lands and Forests (LF); Fish and Wildlife (FW);
Operations (OP); Legal Affairs (LA)

**VI. PRATT-NORTHAM MEMORIAL PARK AND BANK LOT
SUB-PLANS TO THE BLACK RIVER WILD FOREST
UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Area Description 44
 B. History 45
 C. Vegetation 46
 D. Terrain and Soils 46
 E. Fish and Wildlife 47
 F. Public Use of Area 47
 G. Management Goals 47
 H. Management Proposed 47
 I. Summary 48
 J. The Bank Lot 48

A. Area Description

Section C, the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park is located in the southwestern foothills of the Adirondack Park (See Overview Map, Page viii.) Specifically, they are situate in Herkimer County, Town of Ohio, Nobleboro Patent within all or part of the lots listed below. The deed acreages of these "gift land" parcels are divided between those dedicated for silvicultural purposes and those dedicated for park purposes as follows:

PARCEL I	(Silviculture)		282.5
PARCEL II	(Silviculture)		348.1
PARCEL III	(Silviculture)		
	Lot 1 (Old Survey)	688.1 *	
Minus:	Peters' Exception	-1.5	
Plus:	Lot 21 (New Survey)	150.0	
	Lot 22	150.0	
	Lot 55	153.8	
	Lot 79	180.1	
	Lot 80	180.1	
	Lot 82	165.7	
	Lot 83	165.7	
	Lot 84	165.7	
	Lot 85	165.7	
	Lot 86	165.7	
	Lot 88	147.2	
	Lot 89	147.2	
	Lot 92	151.1	
	Lot 96	170.9	
Minus:	Wedocandor Club Exc.	-2.0	2943.5
PARCEL IV	(Park)	1849.3	

* 2.47 acre parcel is reserved for gravel pit rights to the Town of Ohio.

-|- Sub-Plans for Pratt-Northam Memorial Park and Bank Lot -|-

Minus:	SNY Forest Preserve	-399.0	
Minus:	NYS Canal Board Exc.	-546.2	
Minus:	Suckerbrook Allotment	- 16.1	888.0

TOTAL ACREAGE - Pratt-NORTHAM MEMORIAL PARK - 4462.1 Acres

Silvicultural Lands - 3574.1 Ac. Park Lands - 888.0 Ac.

Access is via the North Lake Road to Atwell and then the South Lake Road to the northwest end of South Lake. The town highway ends at a gate 18 miles east of Forestport after leaving South Lake and becoming the Honnedaga Lake Road. An undeveloped parking area for small trailers and a fishing and waterway access site are located at South Lake. The unimproved South Shore Road extends from the public road near the west end of South Lake nearly half way around the south side of the lake to the NYS Department of Transportation control dam. The road then proceeds southerly to the Herkimer Landing Road and the West Creek Road.

B. History

On July 2, 1965, Hazel Northam, executrix of the Walter Pratt Estate, granted 4457.7 acres of land by deed to the State of New York under the terms of Section 3-0151 of the Conservation Law. This is now Article 9 of the Environmental Conservation Law, Title 1, Section 9-0107, "Acceptance by department of lands for parks and for silvicultural research". (See Appendix 16.B.)

Zone 1 (Parcel IV) This zone surrounds South Lake, contains 888 acres and was given for park and reservation purposes pursuant to Paragraph 1. of Section 9-0107 which reads as follows; *"Property so accepted (grants or deeds of gift of any lands) shall forever be under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner (of the Department of Environmental Conservation) and his successors in office and by virtue of the acceptance thereof, shall be irrevocably dedicated to be used for the purposes of a public park or reservation under the care, custody and control of the department and shall not become a part of the Forest Preserve."*

Zone 2 (Parcels I, II and III) These zones contain a total of 3569.7 acres. They were given for the purposes of silvicultural research and experimentation in the science of forestry pursuant to Paragraph 2 of Section 9-0107 as follows;

"Property so accepted shall be under the jurisdiction of the commissioner and his successors in office and until otherwise provided by law, shall be dedicated for use only for those purposes of silvicultural research and experimentation in the science of forestry, including purposes incidental thereto, under the care, custody, control and management of the department and its successors in office and shall not become a part of the forest preserve."

Article XIV of the New York State Constitution states;

"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."

These legal sources seem to be a contradiction in terms. Indeed, there have been allegations that the 'gift land law' is unconstitutional. In his book "Land Acquisition in New York State",

-|- Sub-Plans for Pratt-Northam Memorial Park and Bank Lot -|-

former D.E.C. Division Director and Forest Preserve veteran Norman J. VanValkenburgh includes this 1960 law in a list of questionable laws which "get around the statutory (and Constitutional) requirement that lands could be acquired only for Forest Preserve purposes in the Adirondack and Catskill counties". The summary of a paper entitled 'Article XIV' by Ralph D. Semerad, Professor of Law in Albany, N. Y. suggests that "Article XIV has been construed as permitting uses of the preserve that are not accompanied by substantial destruction of its physical features, that do not effect any change in its wild character and that are not consistent with that character." He further states that borderline situations (with reference to the type, degree and extent of use) should be resolved against the use and in favor of the strict mandate of Article XIV, which was designed to protect the preserve against all activity that might destroy it. Only a constitutional amendment should change that mandate."

Contrarily, the 'gift land law' has existed for some thirty years and it is considered by some to be entirely sufficient for managing these lands and others, under the guidelines stipulated in the 'gift' language. The precedence of the Constitution or the law in this matter needs to be legally determined if the purposes stated in the acquisition transaction are to be realized to the fullest. The question to be answered is: exactly what is the Forest Preserve "as now fixed by law"? Is it lands acquired for addition to the Forest Preserve or is it all State lands acquired inside the Park boundary?

The grantor reserved from all these lands, the right to take timber for a period of 15 years, as set forth in an agreement also dated July 2, 1965. That timber reservation expired on July 2, 1980.

Several unauthorized camps existed totally on the subject property at the time of acquisition. To date, all camps have been removed except for one belonging to the heirs of Francisco Penberthy on the south shore. There is also a boundary agreement being drafted for additional south shore owners surrounded by State lands (Currently Cox and DiNetto) The Suckerbrook Allotment, a 16 acre reservation of private landowners on the north shore is the only other non-public shoreline ownerships on South Lake.

C. Vegetation

The entire area is wooded with climax beech-birch-maple forest occupying the largest percentage of the area. Much of the lower elevation land and several areas near the lake support mixed hardwood-softwood forest with spruce, balsam, hemlock and the common Adirondack hardwoods. Most of the merchantable sawtimber and softwood pulp was removed during the cited timber reservation. Forest inventory results for the Silvicultural portion of the property are appended to this Sub-Plan. (See Appendix 16)

D. Terrain and Soils

The typically rugged Adirondack terrain contains both abrupt and rolling hills. Most of the land occurs within an elevation range from 2,018 feet above sea level at South Lake to approximately 2,200 feet with scattered high points of approximately 2,500 feet. The major soil series is identified as Becket, Berkshire and Potsdam areas. See Appendix 3 for specifics on the soil classifications.

-|- Sub-Plans for Pratt-Northam Memorial Park and Bank Lot -|-.

E. Fish and Wildlife

Fish and wildlife information for the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park will be found in appropriate sections and appendices of the Black River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan to which this sub-plan is appended.

F. Public Use of Area

Existing public use is at a level well below the capacity of the area to withstand use. The few who are familiar with the area use it for boating, primitive camping and hunting. Locally, the area has a favorable reputation for deer hunting although it has not been hunted heavily, probably because of land ownership patterns. The very clear, attractive shoreline and generally pleasing aesthetics of the South Lake area make the lake ideal for canoeing and small boats. Power boats are permitted.

Similarly, the Black River Wild Forest which surrounds it and this Memorial Park may not be considered remote, although they are somewhat 'out of the way' and that may be part of the reason for the low level of public use that this area receives.

G. Management Goals

There are no currently identified projects requiring silvicultural research. In light of the Semerad report, it is recommended that the constitutionality of Section 9-0107 of the Environmental Conservation Law be resolved. If the constitutional issue is resolved favoring the law, this unit plan should be amended to include appropriate experimental, harvesting or research projects fitting the ecological setting within the remaining years of this unit management sub-plan.

The management goal within Zone 1 (park purposes) will be to provide for the public's recreational use and enjoyment of these lands in conformance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Section 9-0107 of the Environmental Conservation Law if constitutional.

The management goal within Zone 2 will be to manage that portion of the Memorial Park for the purposes of silvicultural research and experimentation in the science of forestry and related purposes such as forest recreation and wildlife management and other purposes incidental thereto in accordance with paragraph 2 of Section 9-0107 of the Environmental Conservation Law if constitutional. Pending the resolution of the constitutional issue, the tract will be managed in a manner consistent with Article XIV and in conjunction with the rest of the Black River Wild Forest.

H. Management Proposed

1. Determine the constitutionality of the area's exclusion from the Forest Preserve.
2. In accordance with the deed covenant, install a standard wooden identification sign near the entrance to the property identifying it as the "Pratt-Northam Memorial Park".
3. Maintain the boundary lines and post them using a new sign with standard State logo and the name "Pratt-Northam Memorial Park."
4. The gift land agreement requires that NYS provide access for recreational use of the Pratt-Northam Park including hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, birdwatching, snowmobiling, etc. During the third year of the plan, rehabilitate the existing South

-|- **Sub-Plans for Pratt-Northam Memorial Park and Bank Lot** -|-

Shore (South Lake) Road from the end of the Cox ROW to the Pratt-Northam Park Parcel II (approximately 1 mile.) Develop a 15 car parking lot for parking/camping and gate the road at the parking lot. Open the gate during the snowmobile season.

5. Improve the fishing and waterway access site area at South Lake with a developed parking facility. An open, nearly level, gravelly site exists there and minimum construction would only involve grading and the installation of posts and signs.
6. Complete land title and boundary line surveys and resolve illegal occupancies as per the Black River Wild Forest Management Plan.
7. Rehabilitate the connecting snowmobile trail between the South Shore Road and the North Lake Road. The minor brushing required to open this route, which follows old logging roads on the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park, would eliminate the hazardous current need to traverse the highway from North Lake to South Lake. A request should be initiated to obtain the Adirondack Park Agency's favorable consideration of this project within the first year of this sub-plan. The Ohio Ridgerunner Snowmobile Club has expressed a desire to apply for a Temporary Revocable Permit to allow for their grooming and minor maintenance following brushing.

I. Summary

It is expected that these measures will provide ample notice that the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park exists for public use. The most likely result of these actions and other efforts to increase public awareness about the Memorial Park will be a gradual increase in public use for boating, hiking, primitive camping and hunting. This will necessitate a level of maintenance commensurate with the level of use received by this area south of the lake. The five year revision of this unit management sub-plan will need to consider specific maintenance projects to address any additional environmental impact on the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park.

J. Bank Lot

The People of the State of New York acquired a second parcel which is appended to this sub-plan because it was also acquired under the terms of and pursuant to Paragraph 2 of Section 9-0107 of the Environmental Conservation Law. In the deed between the St. Lawrence National Bank and the People of the State of New York, it is declared that the parcel is given "in desiring to assist in the development of the Environmental Conservation program of the State of New York and wishing to promote the health and welfare of New York citizens by providing lands to be used for reforestation purposes, as and for an absolute Gift without condition or reservation".

This property, which abuts State Forest Oneida No. 6 (Popple Pond State Forest) consists of approximately 145 acres of gift land just within the Adirondack Park. Specifically, the area lies in Lots 1 and 8 of the Seymour Tract of Adgate's Eastern Tract, Town of Forestport in Oneida County (See Appendix 18.)

The constitutionality of this small tract's exclusion from the Adirondack Forest Preserve raises questions identical to the situation with the Pratt-Northam Memorial Park and these issues should be resolved at the same time. The parcel's distance from the main portion of Forest Preserve makes it most desirable managerially, to move the blue line to exclude it from the Forest Preserve and to manage it in conjunction with the adjacent State forest.

-|- Sub-Plans for Pratt-Northam Memorial Park and Bank Lot -|-

Fisheries biological survey data for the two streams within the Bank Lot should be included in the five-year revision of this management plan.

**VII. SUB-PLANS FOR CONSERVATION EASEMENT LANDS
(LYONS FALLS PULP & PAPER INC.)**

A. HISTORY

In May of 1990, after many laborious months of difficult negotiations involving DEC staff, the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper Inc., a deal was struck whereby DEC would receive conservation easements on three parcels occupying 17,788 acres of land in Oneida, Herkimer and Lewis Counties. This protected the three properties known as the J. P. Lewis Tract, John Brown Tract and Three Lakes Tract from development while allowing public recreation for NYS and guaranteeing timber rights for the Lyons Falls Company. Two of these parcels are adjacent to the Black River Wild Forest and are included as sub-plans herein. (See Overview Map, Page viii and Appendix 20.)

Easements are monitored continuously for compliance with the terms of the agreement and annual inspection reports are submitted to the Director of the Division of Lands and Forests. The following easement highlights are not intended to be all-encompassing. When determining the compliance of any action for legal purposes, the actual easement should be reviewed.

B. HIGHLIGHTS OF EASEMENT AGREEMENT FOR J. P. LEWIS TRACT - 11,490 Acres

ARTICLE 1. - General Provisions

- 1.1 Purposes
- 1.2 Definitions

ARTICLE 2. - Vehicular Ingress and Egress

2.1 Rights of Vehicular Ingress and Egress

DEC is given a 50' wide right-of-way along the Loop Road from the property line to the intersection with the North Branch (Black River) Road. This may be widened and extended as necessary at up to 12 locations to provide for drive-to camping areas. Four parking lots have been designated and mapped, three along the Loop Road and one northwest of the Honnedaga Road.

2.2 Limitations

Except for the above, no vehicular ingress or egress is permitted. Camping is not permitted in the parking areas or the R.O.W. except for those parking lots in Forest Management Areas (FMA) 3 and 7.

2.3 Construction, Maintenance, Etc.

DEC is responsible for use regulation and costs relative to parking areas and drive-to campsites. DEC must initially improve and consequently maintain the Loop Road to Class A Truck Trail standards prior to using drive-to campsites. DEC and LFP&P Inc. are each responsible for specific damage caused by them. DEC is responsible for road, trail and parking lot signage.

ARTICLE 3. - Recreational Activity and Camping

3.1 Rights of Recreational Use

DEC receives the right to use any portion of the premises for recreational activity and camping and to establish, maintain and use 7 mapped trails for access. Additional trails may be agreed upon. Construction, reconstruction, repair, maintenance and signage are the responsibility of DEC.

3.2 Campsites

DEC receives the right to provide up to 12 drive-to campsites large enough for 3 tents and a turnaround to be located at mutually agreeable locations SE of the Loop Rd. (NW side of North Lake). DEC is responsible for costs and initial development of Loop Road prior to use of these drive-to sites. Additionally, primitive campsites (as defined in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan) may be designated on the SE side of North Lake with precise location by mutual agreement and DEC responsible for costs. All campsites will be located outside of wetland areas at a minimum distance of 50 feet from the shoreline consistent with suitable site selection criteria such as location consideration of proper aspect, physical screening from the lake and placement at sufficient distance to maintain a reasonable privacy between sites. Campsite construction will consist of removal of brush and trees up to approximately 6" d.b.h., removal of duff to mineral soil and placement of gravel for a stone fire ring.

3.3 Excepted Closure Areas

LFP&P Inc. may close all or a portion of one designated FMA at a given time in order to undertake timber harvesting or forest crop removal. Closure will last a maximum of 2 years from either the time of posting or the cessation of harvesting. DEC will notify users of closure. DEC may close any FMA or any other area of the premises to public use whenever it deems appropriate. Uses other than camping are allowed in closed areas, but only in mapped buffer zones.

3.4 Prohibited Uses

LFP&P Inc. does not authorize anyone using the premises to do anything against any laws including the ECL as it reads presently or in the future.

3.5 Uses Requiring Grantor's Further Consent

These are listed in the indenture as follows:

- a. Erection or maintenance of any type of permanent camp other than the drive-to campsites or designated primitive campsites.
- b. Use of fire except for on-site cooking, warmth or smudge; or improper use of fire.
- c. Use of open fire in any closed area or anywhere that has been a closed area at any time during the immediately preceding three years.
- d. Destruction of any trees except as required for bona fide administration purposes, except that campers may use dead and down trees for warmth, cooking and smudge.
- e. The deposit of any lighted matches, cigars, cigarettes or other burning tobacco where they will cause fire.
- f. Pollution of surface or ground water.
- g. Use of motorized or mechanically propelled vehicles except as authorized or as required for bona fide administration and enforcement.
- h. An organized mass gathering for any purpose.
- i. Destruction of any sign, structure, barrier or object belonging to Grantor.

3.6 Limitations

No use of the premises is permitted except as specifically authorized by the terms and conditions of this Article. DEC is responsible for the regulation of recreational activity and camping upon the premises by persons other than LFP&P Inc. and may, in its sole discretion, further prohibit, restrict, limit or condition any or all recreational activity and camping by such persons beyond the terms and conditions contained in this Article.

ARTICLE 4 - Soil, Mineral and Subsurface Rights

The subparagraphs in this article stipulate DEC's non-exclusive right to extract (without cost) soil, sand, gravel, etc. for use in minor construction relative to recreational activity. It is also stated that LFP&P Inc. will not extract same except for on premises forest management activities although the Company retains fee title.

ARTICLE 5 - Fish and Wildlife

DEC is granted the right to administratively manage fish and wildlife.

ARTICLE 6 - Building and Forest Management Restrictions

LFP&P Inc. will not construct or maintain any permanent or temporary structure without the written consent of DEC with the exception of Structure "C" and a closed 5 acre reservation. Allowed structures which may be constructed, maintained and used in connection with forest management activities are listed.

Buffer zones are identified in subparagraph 6.5 as follows:

Zone 1 - Within 100 feet of the centerline of the Loop Road R.O.W. and the parking areas and within 200 feet of the shoreline of North Lake.

Zone 2 - Within 200 feet of the shoreline of Hardscrabble Lake.

Zone 3 - From the premises boundary to the North Lake buffer, those areas within 100 feet of the centerline of Jock's Brook, North Branch Black River and Ice Cave Creek.

Zone 4 - Within 100 feet of the parking area off Honnedaga Road and within 100 feet of the centerline of the trail leading to Hardscrabble Lake buffer and North Lake buffer.

Delineation of buffer zones shall be completed within one year after the date of the Indenture, or any extensions of time to which DEC consents. The following shall apply within such buffer zones:

Timber harvesting shall not result in a residual basal area of less than 80 square feet per acre in standing trees 5.6 inches diameter breast height and larger. Therein, DEC may cut or remove vegetation for safety or aesthetic reasons, but all timber cut or removed remains the property of LFP&P Inc. Log landings shall be at least 200 feet from the centerline of the Loop Road and the parking areas.

The remaining Articles are legal in nature and are listed as follows:

ARTICLE 7 - Representations and Warranties

ARTICLE 8 - Rights Retained by Grantor

ARTICLE 9 - Cooperation

ARTICLE 10 - Enforcement

ARTICLE 11 - Taxes and Assessments

ARTICLE 12 - Estoppel Certificates

ARTICLE 13 - Assignment and Transfer

ARTICLE 14 - Modification and Termination

ARTICLE 15 - Notices

ARTICLE 16 - Amendments

ARTICLE 17 - Indemnification and Contracts

ARTICLE 18 - Severability
ARTICLE 19 - Governing Law
ARTICLE 20 - Entire Agreement

C. HIGHLIGHTS OF EASEMENT AGREEMENT FOR JOHN BROWN TRACT

ARTICLE 1. - General Provisions

- 1.1 Purposes
- 1.2 Definitions

ARTICLE 2. - Vehicular Ingress and Egress

2.1 Rights of Vehicular Ingress and Egress

At it's expense, DEC may designate, clear, improve, maintain and use not more than one acre for the construction of parking areas at each of the four locations shown on the attached map. DEC is granted a Right-of-Way not to exceed 50 feet in width for vehicular ingress and egress over the former bed of NYS Route 28 from the present Route 28 to the northern-most parking area. This R.O.W. and the location of the parking areas will be designated on the ground and on a survey map by DEC within one year of the date of the indenture.

2.2 Limitations

Excepting the above, no vehicular ingress or egress, parking on or use of the premises by motorized vehicles is permitted except for bona fide administrative or enforcement purposes. Camping is not permitted in the parking areas or the R.O.W. with the exception of the parking lot in Forest Management Area (FMA) 4.

2.3 Snowmobiles

DEC is granted exclusive reasonable and prudent snowmobiling rights on the premises restricted; limited and conditioned as follows; All use will be in the existing, single snowmobile travel corridor located near the easterly boundary of the premises along NYS Route 28, to be located on a DEC survey map prior to such use. Snowmobile usage will not materially interfere with forest management activity on the Premises and may be restricted by LFP&P Inc. within a closure zone or whenever unsafe conditions occur.

2.4 Construction, Maintenance, etc.

DEC will bear the cost and is responsible for the construction, reconstruction, improvement, repair, maintenance in a reasonable and safe condition, operation and signage of the R.O.W., parking areas and snowmobile travel corridor and for the regulation of their use.

ARTICLE 3. - Recreational Activity and Camping

3.1 Rights of Recreational Use

DEC receives the right to use any portion of the premises for recreational activity and camping and to establish, maintain and use 3 mapped trails for access. Trail location will be agreed upon and designated on the ground and on a map within one year of this indenture. Additional trails may be agreed upon. Responsibility and costs for construction, reconstruction, repair, maintenance and signage of these trails are DEC's.

3.2 Excepted Closure Areas

-|- Sub-Plans for Conservation Easement Lands -|-

LFP&P Inc. may close all or a portion of one designated FMA at a given time to recreational activity and camping in order to undertake timber harvesting or forest crop removal. Closure will last a maximum of 2 years from either the time of posting or the cessation of harvesting. DEC will notify users of closure. DEC may close any FMA or any other area of the premises to public use whenever it deems appropriate. Uses other than camping are allowed in closed areas, but only in mapped buffer zones.

The verbiage contained in Article 3.3 through Article 5 is basically the same as that in appropriate sections of the J. P. Lewis Tract Indenture as cited above.

ARTICLE 6 - Building and Forest Management Restrictions

LFP&P Inc. will not construct or maintain any permanent or temporary structure without the written consent of DEC. Allowed structures which may be constructed, maintained and used in connection with Forest Management Activities are listed. DEC will remove Structures "A" and "B" per the attached map within one year of the indenture. Three buffer zones are identified in subparagraph 6.5. as follows:

Zone 1 - Within 200 feet of the edge of the Right-of-Way of NYS Route 28 and within 100 feet of the R.O.W. and parking areas.

Zone 2 - Within 200 feet of the present shoreline of Gull Lake and within 100 feet of the centerline of Gull Lake Trail to Buffer Zone 1.

Zone 3 - Within 200 feet of the present shoreline of the Moose River and within 100 feet of the parking area adjoining the Moose River Road.

Information on the delineation of and the applications within, mapped buffer zones and Articles 7 through 20 is similar to that in the J. P. Lewis Indenture as listed above.

The John Brown Tract Easement is split between the Independence River Wild Forest (west of Rt. 28 & North of the Moose River) and the Black River Wild Forest. The easement along the Moose River will not only protect that view shed from development, but it will also provide additional camping opportunity and resting/day use for rafters, canoeists and kayakers.

The main snowmobile corridor coming south from Thendara (Town of Webb Trail # 6) is within the Black River Wild Forest until it reaches the John Brown Tract Easement. It crosses to the east side of NYS Route 28 in the vicinity of Gull Lake and then comes back across onto Easement Lands. NYSDOT has conveyed to the Town of Webb, an easement on the former roadbed of old Route 28 and much of the trail is on that old road. This is a key major corridor connecting with the Brandy Lake Trail and proceeding then to Boonville. It is important that this entire trail continues to remain open for public use.

The new foot trail connecting NYS Route 28 to the Independence River Wild Forest and the Ha-De-Ron-Dah Wilderness is made possible by this easement. As recommended in Final Unit Management Plans for both of these units, this trail will allow the trails in the southern part of the Ha-De-Ron-Dah Wilderness to be reconnected to a parking lot near Route 28.

Management options for these lease lands are defined in the appropriate indentures and budgeting and subsequent project completion will be performed as appropriate.

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