

APPENDICES

Appendix A : Animals on Erwin Unit Management Plan Area

These are not intended to be all-inclusive lists, some animals will be missed, and some may no longer be found on these areas.

Birds

This list is summarized from the quads of the 1980-85 Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State.

By common name, scientific name & protective status

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protected NY
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	Protected
Green-backed Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>	Protected
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Game Species
Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>	Game Species
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Game Species
Hooded Merganser	<i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i>	Game Species
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	Game Species
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	Protected
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Threatened
Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>	Protected
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	Protected
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	Protected
Ring-necked Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Game Species
Ruffed Grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>	Game Species
Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	Game Species
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	Game Species
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	Protected
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularia</i>	Protected
American Woodcock	<i>Scolopax minor</i>	Game Species
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	Unprotected
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Protected
Black-billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>	Protected
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Protected
Eastern Screech-Owl	<i>Otus asio</i>	Protected
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	Protected

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protected NY
Barred Owl	<i>Strix varia</i>	Protected
Whip-poor-will	<i>Caprimulgus vociferus</i>	Protected
Chimney Swift	<i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	Protected
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	<i>Archilochus colubris</i>	Protected
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	Protected
Downy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides pubescens</i>	Protected
Hairy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides villosus</i>	Protected
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	Protected
Pileated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>	Protected
Eastern Wood-Pewee	<i>Contopus virens</i>	Protected
Alder Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax alnorum</i>	Protected
Willow Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii</i>	Protected
Least Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax minimus</i>	Protected
Eastern Phoebe	<i>Sayornis phoebe</i>	Protected
Great Crested Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus crinitus</i>	Protected
Eastern Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>	Protected
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	Protected
Purple Martin	<i>Progne subis</i>	Protected
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	Protected
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	Protected
Bank Swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Protected
Cliff Swallow	<i>Hirundo pyrrhonota</i>	Protected
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Protected
Blue Jay	<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>	Protected
Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Parus atricapillus</i>	Protected
Tufted Titmouse	<i>Parus bicolor</i>	Protected
White-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta carolinensis</i>	Protected
Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>	Protected
Carolina Wren	<i>Thryothorus ludovicianus</i>	Protected
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	Protected
Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Protected
Golden-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus satrapa</i>	Protected
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>	Protected
Eastern Bluebird	<i>Sialia sialis</i>	Protected-Special Concern
Veery	<i>Catharus fuscescens</i>	Protected
Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	Protected
Wood Thrush	<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>	Protected
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	Protected
Gray Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>	Protected
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	Protected

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protected NY
Brown Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma rufum</i>	Protected
Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	Protected
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Unprotected
Solitary Vireo	<i>Vireo solitarius</i>	Protected
Yellow-throated Vireo	<i>Vireo flavifrons</i>	Protected
Warbling Vireo	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>	Protected
Red-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>	Protected
Blue-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora pinus</i>	Protected
Golden-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	Protected
Nashville Warbler	<i>Vermivora ruficapilla</i>	Protected
Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>	Protected
Chestnut-sided Warbler	<i>Dendroica pensylvanica</i>	Protected
Black-throated Blue Warbler	<i>Dendroica caerulescens</i>	Protected
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Dendroica coronata</i>	Protected
Black-throated Green Warbler	<i>Dendroica virens</i>	Protected
Blackburnian Warbler	<i>Dendroica fusca</i>	Protected
Prairie Warbler	<i>Dendroica discolor</i>	Protected
Cerulean Warbler	<i>Dendroica cerulea</i>	Protected
Black-and-white Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>	Protected
American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	Protected
Ovenbird	<i>Seiurus aurocapillus</i>	Protected
Louisiana Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus motacilla</i>	Protected
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	Protected
Canada Warbler	<i>Wilsonia canadensis</i>	Protected
Scarlet Tanager	<i>Piranga olivacea</i>	Protected
Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>	Protected
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>	Protected
Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>	Protected
Rufous-sided Towhee	<i>Pipilo erythrophthalmus</i>	Protected
Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>	Protected
Field Sparrow	<i>Spizella pusilla</i>	Protected
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>	Protected-Special Concern
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	Protected
Grasshopper Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	Protected-Special Concern
Henslow's Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus henslowii</i>	Protected-Special Concern
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	Protected
Swamp Sparrow	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>	Protected
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	Protected
Bobolink	<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	Protected
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	Protected

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protected NY
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	Protected
Common Grackle	<i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>	Protected
Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>	Protected
Northern Oriole	<i>Icterus galbula</i>	Protected
Purple Finch	<i>Carpodacus purpureus</i>	Protected
House Finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	Protected
American Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis tristis</i>	Protected
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Unprotected

Reptiles and Amphibians

This list is summarized from the quads of the NYS Amphibian and Reptile Atlas, 1990-1999.

By scientific name and common name.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Spotted Salamander	<i>Ambystoma maculatum</i>
Eastern American Toad	<i>Bufo a. americanus</i>
Common Snapping Turtle	<i>Chelydra s. serpentina</i>
Painted Turtle	<i>Chrysemys picta</i>
Northern Dusky Salamander	<i>Desmognathus fuscus</i>
Allegheny Dusky Salamander	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>
Northern Ringneck Snake	<i>Diadophis punctatus edwardsii</i>
Northern Two-lined Salamander	<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>
Longtail Salamander	<i>Eurycea l. longicauda</i>
Northern Spring Salamander	<i>Gyrinophilus p. porphyriticus</i>
Four-toed Salamander	<i>Hemidactylium scutatum</i>
Gray Treefrog	<i>Hyla versicolor</i>
Northern Water Snake	<i>Nerodia s. sipedon</i>
Red-spotted Newt	<i>Notophthalmus v. viridescens</i>
Northern Redback Salamander	<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>
Northern Slimy Salamander	<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>
Northern Spring Peeper	<i>Pseudacris c. crucifer</i>
Bullfrog	<i>Rana catesbeiana</i>
Green Frog	<i>Rana clamitans melanota</i>
Pickerel Frog	<i>Rana palustris</i>
Northern Leopard Frog	<i>Rana pipiens</i>
Wood Frog	<i>Rana sylvatica</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Northern Brown Snake	<i>Storeria d. dekayi</i>
Northern Redbelly Snake	<i>Storeria o. occiptomaculata</i>
Common Garter Snake	<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>

Fish Species

No recent surveys have occurred in these streams. The following is a list of species that are probable within this unit management plan area.

By common name and scientific name

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Central Stoneroller	<i>Campostoma anomalum</i>
Carp	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>
Cutlips minnow	<i>Exoglossum maxillingua</i>
Common Shiner	<i>Notropis cornutus</i>
Spottail shiner	<i>Notropis hudsonius</i>
Spotfin shiner	<i>Notropis spilopterus</i>
Golden Shiner	<i>Notemigonus crysoluecas</i>
Fathead Minnow	<i>Pimephales promelas</i>
Bluntnose minnow	<i>Pimephales notatus</i>
Longnose Dace	<i>Rhinichthys cataractae</i>
Blacknose Dace	<i>Rhinichthys atratulus</i>
Creek Chub	<i>Semotilus atromaculatus</i>
White Sucker	<i>Catostomus commersoni</i>
Northern Hogsucker	<i>Hypentelium nigricans</i>
Brown Bullhead	<i>Ameiurus nebulosus</i>
Margined madtom	<i>Noturus insignis</i>
Chain pickerel	<i>Esox niger</i>
Mottled Sculpin	<i>Cottus bairdi</i>
Pumpkinseed	<i>Lepomis gibbosus</i>
Bluegill	<i>Lepomis macrochirus</i>
Rock Bass	<i>Ambloplites rupestris</i>
Smallmouth Bass	<i>Micropterus dolomieu</i>
Largemouth Bass	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>
Tessellated darter	<i>Etheostoma olmsted</i>
Yellow Perch	<i>Perca flavescens</i>

Appendix B : Public Comment

Initial Mailing Responses

The following Erwin Unit Management Plan public comments were received as a result of an initial October 15, 2004 mailing to a previously identified audience including adjacent property owners, local government officials, recreational groups, forest industry groups, wildlife groups and other general environmental groups and the local media.

Town of Erwin, 117 West Water Street, Painted Post, NY

Provide good directional information to travelers so that they can find the access points.

Improve the parking areas.

Upgrade the trails with blazes and produce larger scale maps. We will incorporate your trail system into our final recommendations for linkages with the town-wide trail system.

Sue A. Poelvoorde, NYS OPRHP-Finger Lakes Region, 2221 Taughannock Park Road, Trumansburg, NY

With respect to the McCarthy Hill State Forest segment, due to its proximity to OPRHP's Pinnacle State Park, public access opportunities should be compatible with the management and operation of the golf course as the public will use the properties as one large unit. No off-road (ATVs, 4-wheelers(autos)) should be allowed for that reason.

George Dudick, Painted Post, NY

An available (unlocked) access to the Erwin Wildlife Management area pond is needed from the Painted Post area.

Consider the installation of a firing range in the Erwin Wildlife Management Area.

Bradley Q. & Elizabeth M. Kinsman, Painted Post, NY

Monitor gas drilling and pipe installations closely and frequently.

Advise us when logging operations, etc. are to take place in management area.

Open up on (up on top of ridge) for public recreation use and develop road access.

James W. Taylor, Painted Post, NY

Future management of the Erwin WMA should place more emphasis upon habitat enhancement and less upon timber, gas, vehicular access, etc. But we can't manage what we don't know. Are certain species in decline? Are invasive species increasing? Any plan must begin with a comprehensive census with wide use of such sources as hunters (the DEC's bow hunter sighting log for example), environmental organizations such as the Cornell lab of Ornithology and Audubon's local chapter. The job is huge but progress has already been made - littering and vandalism are down. We must continue to enhance and pass this local treasure on for the enjoyment of future generations.

Charles & Deanna Preston, Addison, NY

Timber Management: There are many theories on the subject so I would leave that up to environmentally-minded experts except to say choose contractors who tread lightly and do the least damage, and leave some areas untouched.

Public access: It is my wish that the gates be kept closed year round. I believe people who are serious about hunting, fishing or recreation are there partially for the exercise and don't mind walking, cycling or skiing in. Reserve access for the handicapped.

P.S.: I'm tired of picking up trash and seeing vandalism of the signs.

Dom Scoloaro, Landowner next to Erwin Unit, Coopers Plains, NY

1. Computer operated gate to let registered residents enter to small game hunt and fish and hike. If they violate rules, take their code off.

2. Build more lean-tos for people to picnic and enjoy. (I'll build a couple)

3. Logging only to thin woods. The last loggers wrecked the woods.

Using a code system lets you know who is entering the woods.

The name explains it: Erwin Wildlife Management Area. Most all activities should revolve around its name. People should be able to spectate wildlife and enjoy nature and during hunting season be able to thin healthy populations of animals. All activities should be centered around animals (hesitate [sic]) habitat and the public's right to enjoy nature without upsetting the balance.

Howard Beye, Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Mt. Morris, NY

The FLTC is in the process of trying to determine a potential trail route from the Six Nations area to near Addison. This route most likely will include the Erwin Wildlife Management Area and Erwin Mountain and McCarthy Hill State Forests and other public land. This proposed trail is part of an endeavor to connect the FLT to the Mid-State Trail in Pennsylvania.

In addition to the connection with the Mid-State Trail this new connector trail to be built in NY and PA will, as it moves south from the Mid-State Trail, ultimately connect with the Appalachian Trail. We also understand there is another plan in the works to make a parallel trail to the Appalachian Trail from mid-Alabama to our Adirondacks using a portion of the FLT.

As we move from these very beginning stages of planning we will be and keep in contact with the DEC so the latest information will be available for the Erwin Unit Management Plan.

Richard & Susan Curreri, Painted Post, NY

Open year round; Camping; Snowmobiling; 4-wheeling.

Dorothy Stevens, Waverly, NY

Are you sure of the lines on the Erwin Mountain State Forest?

Any information on value of properties or access to any surveys or aerial shots.

Anonymous

I would like to see the Erwin Wildlife Management Area to include snowmobiling. There is (are) trails to roads already there; it would benefit wildlife to use trails packed by snowmobiles.

Frank L. Thiel, Painted Post, NY

1. For all three parcels, create or recreate trails such as those that formerly existed in the Erwin WMA. The DEC website description is very outdated insofar as current conditions are concerned, but describes the features we would recommend.

2. Restrict vehicle access (including ATVs and snowmobiles).

3. Make use of the roads and clearing done by Fortuna Energy, i.e., do not require restoration to completely reproduce initial conditions.

Margaret M. Holmes, Painted Post, NY

Historically the time I have spent on the land has been hiking, biking, and skiing, but not, usually, during deer hunting season. My personal interest is to be able to continue these activities. I.e., I hope the future includes plans for a multi-use area. My wishes would be for extra trail maintenance to make it more amicable for riding bikes. Please don't misunderstand; I don't envision a park. The lack of spit and polish is one of the area's greatest attractions.

The constant fear is that the area will be “sold out” to gas and/or lumber and/or development interests. Having this undeveloped land is (in my opinion) one of the great interests and attractions of this area. I understand that it only makes good economic sense to cut timber and extract minerals and gas. We who live in this area think it’s vitally important to do so in an environmentally friendly fashion - and require the commercial interests to “clean up” after themselves. I’m not sufficiently conversant with environment concerns to define this well, but it should certainly include returning the land to a condition similar to the way it was before mining or drilling, and replanting with sufficient vegetation to prevent erosion.

Having seen one developer offer to swap developable land for the near-vertical hillside near Coopers, I do hope that the State will be vigilant in protecting against loss of this area - both in total number of acres, but also in value of acreage - value for recreational users such as myself, as well as the number of people who hunt in this area.

The map you mailed shows a trail from near the US-15/17 intersection to the location of the old fire tower. I may be mistaken, but I think much of that trail (over private land) is closed and the Scouts and other citizens are no longer using it. If these comments can contain “pie-in-the-sky” wishes, it certainly would be nice to see that hiking corridor opened again.

In summary, my interests are to keep the areas open to hunting, hiking, biking, and skiing. My fears are that land may be destroyed or lost to commercial interests. I would be happy to talk to you in more detail if it would be of value to you.

James B & Linda S. Stamatoff, Homeowner, Painted Post, NY

Timber which is cut down needs to be removed. Piles of downed trees are unsightly and present a fire hazard. This is especially true for trees piled near residential areas.

James D. Salley, Painted Post, NY

The land could be used for hunting and fishing that’s ok. NO public parks in there. Keep the land in its original state. We have too few forests left as you can see right here in Gang Mills. Deer control and the coydogs with mange should be taken care of but we don’t need any more woods cut down for progress. I realize dead wood should be taken care of, has taken wood out when trees were marked years ago.

P.S. There’s rattlers there and don’t keed (sic) need everybody wandering through there. What would happen with a park.

Steven Acomb, Painted Post, NY

Being a property owner and leasing property bordering State land, I would have a great deal of interest in the plans. We already have a great deal of problems with trespassing and damage to property, mostly coming from ATVs and also from illegal hunting, dumping, etc.

I (we) would have a great deal of concern with any additional access, without State assistance in policing of the State property and adjoining properties.

Of course I am very concerned with gas drilling on State owned land, not only because this land should not be used for these purposes, but because it is also not fair to tax paying property owners bordering with State properties.

Last, but not least, would like to see State land better identified; the excuse we hear most often is “we thought we were on State land” when we encounter trespassers. Although I know it would be a lot of work, I believe the boundaries should be cut or bulldozed all along the perimeters. This would also be very helpful in cases of forest fires. Possibly this work could be done by youth groups hired for summer work (as took place approx. 25 years ago in the Erwin Wildlife Management Area).

Jo Wildeman, Painted Post, NY

Some observations I would like you to consider during your planning phase:

The trails that are kept cut back are fantastic! We enjoy the use of all the trails and the ease in which we can enjoy our outings with small children (the trails make it family friendly). However, one frustration we have

is that each trail rarely connects to the next - the main cuts (traveling North to South up the hill, and we call fire breaks) are connected, but at the top of the hill off the access road those paths generally do not connect for a more circular path. For example, it would be nice to be able to continue the walk past the beaver pond and connect with another path further around the hill.

An often wished-for item would be a trail map. We have searched the Erwin Town Hall, asked around the neighborhood, and now we even have started using GPS to start creating our own map of the trails. An idea of distance and adjacent paths would be a useful tool for our expedition.

One improvement our family would personally enjoy would be access to the property for horse trailers. We have horses boarded at a near-by facility and would enjoy a days outing and trail riding. We currently must travel to Sugar Hill or Hector for trail riding. Perhaps there is an area which is accessible to horse trailers, and we just don't know about it yet. If we could access the area, 4-H groups like ours and other individuals should be able to enjoy the area as well, without the issue of distance.

Without knowing much about the wildlife management, timbering and gas leases, I am hesitant to comment on that aspect of the letter. I know gas drilling has become a part of our area, as well as harvesting the timber. I would be hesitant to comment on the leasing of rights for gas because I really don't have a lot of knowledge about that program. I do know what I have seen after an area was timbered and it was almost not even useable based on the limbs and debris left lying on the ground. (Perhaps we saw an area which did not have certain restrictions placed on the timbering company). I would personally feel concerned about the impact on the land and how the use of the property would change if the gas lease and timbering were permitted. Again, I would like to learn more.

Public Meeting

Verbal comments on the draft plan were received during the April 26, 2007 public meeting held at the Erwin Town Hall. A total of 26 people signed the sign-in sheet. Additional comments were received up to May 26, 2007. A summary of the comments verbalized at the public meeting is followed below by those received in writing during the 30-day comment period.

Verbal comments and/or questions at the public meeting

Comment #1: What are the rules for permanent tree stands? Can hunters put up stands before the season opens and leave them there for the season? Tree stands don't damage trees. Permits may be needed for users like hunters or photographers to put up a blind or a stand. Please restrict use of horses on the trails. Trails should be for hikers. When areas get wet, hikers make a narrow trail around the area.

Reply: New York Codes, Rules and Regulations

Title 6 - Environmental Conservation, Chapter I - Fish and Wildlife, Subchapter G - Fish and Wildlife Management Areas and Facilities, Part 51 - Public Use Of State Wildlife Management Areas:

Sec. 51.5 Structures. No permanent structure, blind, stand or platform shall be constructed or placed except pursuant to written permission of the regional supervisor having jurisdiction or his agent.

Sec. 51.6 General provisions. (c) No person shall remove, cut or willfully damage or destroy living vegetation of any kind, except pursuant to written permission of the regional supervisor having jurisdiction or his agent. (d) All personal property shall be removed from the area at the time of leaving the area.

There is no regulation prohibiting horse use on trails on a wildlife management area. Hikers should not walk around wet areas but instead they should walk through them so as to not widen the trail. (Leave

No Trace - Principle # 2 Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces)

Comment #2: What would it take to open it [Erwin Wildlife Management Area] back up to snowmobiles like it was in early 70s and 80s?

Reply: A regulation change would be required to allow snowmobiles on Erwin WMA. The Department has no desire to initiate such a regulation.

Comment #3: You neglected to mention the connector trail. Two letters were sent that deal with the Great Eastern Trail which also causes this connector trail to be very important link in this North south trail system. I'd like the appendices to reflect the letter from the FLTC and the GET coordinator.

Reply: The letters were received too late to be included in the Draft available at the meeting, but have been included in the final version.

Comment #4: The public does not have access to most of the beautiful hills. The Erwin Management area is an exception. Since acquired in the 1930s, priorities changed its designation of what the intended use is because the area around it is involved. Look at the real value for the community. It is OK to manage for commercial logging, but is the real value recreation for the community or commercial use? Is there a possibility to redesign it for recreational use? The trails are poorly marked. It is easy to get lost. McCarthy trails are marked nicely and laid out well. Could the same thing be done with Erwin?

Reply: Commercial timber harvests are used as a means to improve wildlife habitat on Erwin WMA. The department does not see a conflict with logging activities and recreational use of the property.

The Department agrees that the trail system on Erwin WMA is in need of work. Funding is limited, however the department would work with local organizations under the "Adopt a Natural Resource" program to repair, mark and maintain the trail system.

Comment #5: I have concerns about incompatible users---horses on the same trails as with hikers and bikers. Could we segregate users? The hikers trail is basically a foot path and damage can be done by all sorts of things other than feet.

Reply: Some segregation is possible, but there is too many competing users to separate everyone. Erwin Wildlife Management Area and McCarthy Hill State Forest in particular, have a lot of demand for use, and a limited amount of acres to fit it all in.

Comment #6: Erwin management area is almost impossible to get into except for deer season. There are other hunting seasons. The entrance that is or was off Bear Town Road was closed off. The Field and Stream Club gave an easement to the state at that time to use their property to enter. Why is the gate closed and locked most of the time? Can it be opened for spring and fall turkey season or any other purpose? The fishing pond is a mud hole. I would like better access. Our license fees go into the General Fund where it stays and doesn't come back.

Reply: The gates are locked due to an excessive amount of vandalism and illegal dumping that occurred when the gates were open year round. The department will consider opening the gates for other hunting seasons or for special events like free fishing weekend. License fees are deposited into the Conservation Fund, for more explanation see also Comment #11.

Comment #7: There are a lot of pieces of that land that nobody knows exists unless they're looking around for it.

Comment #8: On behalf of mountain bikers, we're developing a TRP to submit to do some trail maintenance. There is a loosely organized fairly large group of mountain bikers who are interested in volunteering on the properties and are interested in helping with trail creation, trail maintenance, and trash removal. Last year we opened the gate, maintained, and cleared one trail and created another. The second trail

we created was fairly long. We designed it with mountain biking in mind so there are logs in the path. We used all natural resources, we used resources that were there to create this trail. We got a lot of use last year, a lot of enjoyment, a lot of positive feedback from mountain bikers that didn't create it and really enjoyed it. We're actively volunteering to help with the property. My hope is that down the road we could do it on the state forest on Bear Town Road and McCarthy Hill as well. There's a lot of maintenance that needs to be done just on the WMA.

Reply: The Department agrees that the trail system on Erwin WMA is in need of work. Funding is limited, however the department would work with local organizations under the "Adopt a Natural Resource" program to repair, mark and maintain the trail system.

Comment #9: Are there plans to put in a parking lot on the property adjacent to the little chunk of WMA on the south side of Bear Town Road.

Reply: There are no immediate plans to construct a parking lot on the south side of Beartown Rd. A parking area has been discussed for this site but to date there does not seem to be an urgent need. If parking on Beartown Rd. becomes a traffic hazard, off road parking will be constructed.

Comment #10: Have monies been allocated?

Reply: Not yet, and another reason for no immediate plans to construct the parking lot.

Comment #11: Do the proceeds from the sale of timber have to be used on that property? DEC does oversee the contract.

Reply: The proceeds from the sale of forest products on Wildlife Management Areas are deposited into the Conservation Fund. Monies utilized from the Conservation Fund must be spent in accordance with the Environmental Conservation Law, specifically for the care, management, protection and enlargement of the fish and game resources of the State, and for the promotion of public fishing, hunting and trapping. Proceeds from the sale of forest products from State Forests are deposited into the Natural Resources Account, which is a line in the General Fund. Although some of the money from the Natural Resources Account is used for Department salaries, it can be utilized for other general state purposes. In both cases, it is not required nor mandated that proceeds be used on the property from where the timber was harvested.

Comment #12: The words safety and improved in your mission statement jumped out at me, The way the areas were left after the logging operations didn't improve the safety of some of us hunters as it's pretty tough to get through those areas after they've been left. I would like to see better administration of the extent of the cleanup and the method of the cleanup after the logging operations. Erwin is a debacle. Uneven ground is certainly not safe. The tops and the debris left there with the cuttings are not safe. It might be good for the habitat for some of the smaller wildlife and maybe for some of the bird life.

Reply: The mention of safety in the mission statement refers to three main aspects of public land. First is the departments obligation to enforce laws, rules and regulations which protect citizens and the resource. Second would be to provide assistance in case of emergency, such as a recreational user who sustains a medical emergency or becomes lost. Another example would be controlling a wild fire which threatens a community. Third would be construction and maintenance of developed facilities, such as roads, parking, camping areas which are safe and do not have known hazards.

It is true that often following timber harvests, the resulting tops, flush of young growth and uneven ground make it more difficult to get around. However, there are benefits to wildlife and forest health associated with the harvest and access does improve over time. In addition, harvesting is implemented in only a portion of a property at any given time. There are unharvested areas which are easier to navigate. Some recreational users interested in hunting deer and grouse in particular may actually favor using the recently harvested areas.

Comment #13: The latest wave of logging was hardly low impact. There were ruts so deep they were over your knees from heavy equipment going in when the land was soft. There was all kinds of scouring of the land that was never put back to good shape and logs and trees that were just bulldozed over onto existing trails that people use for hiking, hunting and all kinds of other recreational use that was never removed-it looked like an awful mess. To get to just a few healthy robust beautiful trees, it looked like they ripped out hundreds of other trees to get to that one commercial tree. I never heard of a state contract that didn't have some kind of an inspection for restoration.

Reply: Logging often is not low impact and may change the character of the site. Soil disturbance is often one of the impacts. This disturbance creates exposed mineral soil which is favorable, and sometimes necessary, for the germination of many species of trees. Deep wheel ruts, or skid trails on steep slopes, where there may be long term impact to the forest or erosion, are leveled and erosion controls placed at the completion of the harvest. Minor ruts when revegetation establishes quickly on the skid trail are often not smoothed, since grading damages the vegetation which is stabilizing the trail. In addition to soil disturbance, the aesthetics of the area may be impacted, especially if the purpose of the harvest is preparation for regeneration of shade intolerant trees. These harvests involve the removal of the main tree canopy, either in stages (shelterwood) or clearcut. These management systems are the only way to regenerate oak forests which are the major forest type in the Erwin unit.

Comment #14: Separate conflicting uses by large distances, a half mile between trails.

Reply: Unfortunately there just is not enough room to do this. For example, McCarthy Hill State Forest is only about 3/4 of a mile wide. We are aware that this can be an issue, and Recreation action # 2.3 is to minimize conflicts between users.

Comment #15: There is a need for collaboration to continue between user groups and the department.

Reply: We agree, and will continue to encourage the use of the Adopt-a-Natural-Resource-Program by interested clubs.

Summary of comments and/or questions received after the public meeting, and not covered above:

The following is a summary of comments submitted by May 26, 2007. The full text of the comments are located in the next section.

Comment #16: I would like to see state lands better identified.

Reply: It is an uphill battle against the weather and vandalism, but NYS DEC re-paints the boundary lines and signs about every five years. The area signs are replaced as they fade or are stolen. Recreation action #7.1 is to place kiosks at parking lots.

Comment #17: The boundaries should be cut or bulldozed all along the perimeters. This would be helpful in cases of forest fires. Possibly this work could be done by youth groups hired for summer work (as took place approx. 25 years ago in the Erwin Wildlife Management Area).

Reply: For State Forests - Current policy is to provide for clear, well marked, boundaries. A boundary clear cut, unless it is done to meet other objectives, does not meet with current policy direction. Leaving trees on which to paint boundary marks and post signs would seem to be preferable.
For Wildlife Management Areas - see the above discussion. It is our understanding that the boundary clearings for the Erwin area were done for habitat objectives.

Any work done of this type would need to be done by trained, insured, adult workers, not youths.

Comment #18: Are Erwin Mountain State Forest boundary lines accurate?

Reply: The boundaries for Erwin Mountain State Forest are believed to be accurate, as currently painted on the ground. If you have documentary evidence (adjoining owner survey, etc.) to indicate otherwise, please contact the Lands and Forests staff at the Bath office. We would be happy to discuss the situation with you.

Comment #19: Is there information on the value of properties or access to any surveys or aerial shots?

Reply: Property values for state properties are available from the Town Assessor where the property is located. State properties are contained on either Roll Section 5 or Roll Section 8.

Survey maps are available for most State Forest parcels at the Bath office. Please note that a few parcels have not been surveyed, and consequently, survey maps are not available.

Aerial photos for the vast majority of New York state are available at the following Internet location: www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gateway/mg

NYS DEC expects to have a web application which will allow users to do on - line mapping available shortly.

Comment # 20: The DEC website description is outdated. Provide good directional information so travelers can find access points.

Reply: We agree. Work is underway to address this issue. Barring unforeseen circumstances, we expect to have updated area descriptions and maps available in the near future.

Comment # 21: Improve parking areas. We would like access to the property for horse trailers.

Reply: Parking is available on a first come-first serve basis. Access action #6.1 covers the maintenance of all parking lots. The parking lot on Smith Hill Rd is large enough for a small horse trailer to park in.

Comment # 22: Produce larger scale maps. We would like a trail map to provide an idea of distance and adjacent paths.

Reply: Recreation actions 7.0, 7.1 and 7.2 all deal with new brochures, maps and kiosks. As time and money allow maps will be updated and printed. Also, as per Comment # 20, NYS DEC's web site is being updated with better maps and descriptions.

Comment # 23: The town of Erwin will incorporate DEC's trail system into its final recommendations for linkages with the town-wide trail system.

Comment # 24: Create trails such as those that formerly existed in the Erwin WMA. Upgrade trails with blazes. Provide extra trail maintenance to make it more amicable for riding bikes.

Reply: The Department agrees that the trail system on Erwin WMA is in need of work. Money and personnel are limited, but Recreation actions # 6.1 and 6.2 are to maintain the existing trail system. Volunteers under the "Adopt-a-Natural-Resource-Program" are a valuable way of repairing, marking and maintaining the trail system.

Comment # 25: Due to McCarthy Hill State Forest proximity to OPRHP's Pinnacle State Park, public access opportunities should be compatible with the management and operation of the golf course as the public will use the properties as one large unit.

Comment # 26: Use a computer operated gate to let registered residents enter to small game hunt and fish and hike.

Reply: Access to State Wildlife Management Areas or State Forests is provided equally to all people of New York and non-residents as well, not just local residents.

Comment # 27: An available (unlocked) access to the Erwin Wildlife Management area pond is needed from the Painted Post area.

Reply: The department is considering opening up the gates for vehicle access during free fishing weekend in June. An excess of vandalism and illegal dumping prevent season long vehicle access.

Comment # 28: Keep gates closed year round.

Reply: The department opens the gates for deer hunting to encourage the harvest of deer on the property. Reducing the harvest of deer by closing the gates would lead to severe habitat degradation by deer browsing.

Comment # 29: Reserve access for the handicapped.

Comment # 30: Keep the [Erwin WMA] open year round for camping, snowmobiling and four-wheeling.

Reply: Camping, snowmobiling and four-wheeling are not consistent with the primary objective of the property. See also Comment # 57 for a discussion of the purpose for which Erwin WMA was purchased by the State of New York.

Comment # 31: Snow compacted by snowmobiles would benefit wildlife.

Reply: Wildlife do use the trails created by snowmobiles, But, wildlife is negatively effected when they use energy reserves at a critical time of year to get away from snowmobiles.

Comment # 32: Restrict vehicle access (including ATVs and snowmobiles). No off-road (ATVs, 4-wheelers (autos)) should be allowed. Motorized recreational vehicles, such as snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles (ATV), disrupt the natural setting trail-users desire and can harm the trail tread (e.g. erosion, "puddling", unnecessary widening, destruction of vegetation, etc..)

Reply: On State Forest - New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Chapter II, Part 190, Definition 8 Motor vehicle shall mean ... incorporating a motor or an engine of any type for propulsion, ..., but shall not include snowmobiles. And 190.8 part m. Use of motor vehicles on State land ... is prohibited, except where specifically permitted by posted notice or by permit issued by the department.
On Wildlife Management Areas - New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Chapter I, Part 51.4 (b) Off-road travel or use of motorcycles, motor scooters, mopeds, trail bikes, snowmobiles or any other motorized vehicles is prohibited except as specifically permitted by posted notice.

Comment # 33: Make use of the roads and clearing done by Fortuna Energy, i.e., do not require restoration to completely reproduce initial conditions.

Comment # 34: As an adjacent property owner, we have problems with trespassing and damage to property, mostly from ATVs, also from illegal hunting, dumping, etc. We have concern with additional access, without state assistance in policing of the state property and adjoining properties.

Comment # 35: Points of access should be protected from intrusion by unauthorized users.

Comment # 36: Consider installing a firing range in the Erwin Wildlife Management Area.

Reply: If public demand was sufficient and funds available a shooting range could be considered.

Comment # 37: Open up top of ridge for public recreation use and develop road access.

Comment # 38: The Finger Lakes Trail Conference is determining a potential trail route to connect the FLT to the Mid-State Trail in Pennsylvania, from the Six Nations area to near Addison, which will likely include Erwin Wildlife Management Area, Erwin Mountain and McCarthy Hill State Forests and other public land. This new connector trail will, as it moves south from the Mid-State Trail, ultimately connect with the Appalachian Trail. FLTC would like to develop a footpath within the Erwin Unit wherein all other uses of such trail would be prohibited and with such requirements clearly identified with appropriately placed and esthetically designed signs. The goal of the GET is to be a foot path, with use by motorized vehicles strictly prohibited. The FLT Branch/GET trail would be clearly identified preferably with orange blazes. Other trails that cross or utilize a portion of the trail should be separately and clearly identified to avoid confusion for the user. The FLT Branch/GET track should be protected from disruption during any timber harvests, oil and gas exploration, and oil and gas drilling. Structures such as foot bridges, parking areas, and lean-tos should be considered when establishing trail route.

Comment # 39: Build more lean-tos for people to picnic and enjoy. I support the creation of two lean-tos and small primitive campsites within the Erwin Unit if these sites are part of a larger trail or trail system that extends beyond Erwin Unit lands and into other parts of New York or beyond.

Reply: Recreation Action # 4.3 is to build a lean-to on McCarthy Hill State Forest, there are no plans to build any picnic areas.

Comment # 40: Open the trail from near the US-15/17 intersection to the location of the old fire tower.

Reply: What trail? There is a stream from Kuhnle/Erwin pond that eventually joins the Tioga River just south of the 15/17 intersection. At one time a telephone line connected into the firetower and cabin from the east, that still exists as an access trail that ends at the boundary line clearing.

Comment # 41: The trails that are kept cut back are fantastic!

Comment # 42: Each trail rarely connects to the next - the main cuts (traveling North to South up the hill, and we call fire breaks) are connected, but at the top of the hill off the access road those paths generally do not connect for a more circular path. For example, it would be nice to be able to continue the walk past the beaver pond and connect with another path further around the hill.

Comment # 43: We would like to enjoy horse trail riding here.

Comment # 44: Horse traffic and mountain bikes, although not motorized or noisy, seriously damage the trail surface.

Comment # 45: I support creation of not more than two wheelchair/visual impairment access trails, each no more than 3/4 mile long (with a construction disturbance area of no more than 10-feet wide), within the Erwin Unit.

Comment # 46: I oppose the creation of new wheelchair/visual impairment access trails in the Erwin unit, except where those trails are situated adjacent to existing parking areas, or new parking areas adjacent to but outside the borders of the Erwin Unit lands.

Comment # 47: The best and most important use for Erwin WMA in the future will be for public recreation such as hiking, fishing, and biking.

Comment # 48: Future management of the Erwin WMA should place more emphasis upon habitat enhancement and less upon timber, gas, vehicular access, etc. Are certain species in decline? Are invasive species increasing? The plan must begin with a comprehensive census with wide use of such sources as hunters

(the DEC's bow hunter sighting log for example), environmental organizations such as the Cornell lab of Ornithology and Audubon's local chapter.

Reply: The department has concerns about the aging of the forest on the WMA. With no habitat manipulation it is likely that the main overstory of oak would be lost. Early successional species as a whole are in decline in the northeast and invasive species are on the rise.

Comment # 49: Activities should be related to wildlife management.

Comment # 50: There are rattlers there.

Reply: It is not likely that rattlesnake could travel to any of the state properties under this plan, from any of the known den locations. If rattlesnakes are found on any of the properties the department would like to be notified so further studies can be made.

Comment # 51: Erwin WMA should be open for turkey season; it is featured in many hunting magazines as a good place to hunt.

Reply: Erwin WMA is available for spring and fall turkey seasons. Anyone may park in the parking lot and walk past the gate. If you are disabled stop by, or call, a NYS DEC office for an application to operate an ATV on designated trails under Commissioners Policy 3.

Comment # 52: There is a bald eagle (a pair) that probably has a nest in the area.

Reply: The department is aware of a bald eagle nest in the area.

Comment # 53: Post hunting schedules and rules at the main access points. I am aware of deer hunting season but there are other times when people hunt in the area.

Reply: The department will install kiosks as money becomes available per Public Recreation and Use action #7.1. Hunting season information may be included in the information presented. Additional information is available on our web site: www.dec.ny.gov

Comment # 54: Choose contractors who tread lightly and do the least damage, and leave some areas untouched. Limit logging to thin woods. The last loggers wrecked the woods.

Reply: Thinning is a good forest management practice to improve growth, forest health, and species composition in forest stands which have not reached maturity. When a forest stand reaches maturity a regeneration method must be chosen. There are only three options available. 1. Even age management. 2. Uneven age management 3. No management.

In option 3, the decision is made to let nature decide choose between even and uneven age and there will be little or no utilization of trees for forest products or income. On State Forests acquisition was based on the State Reforestation Law of 1929 which states the areas, "were to be forever devoted to ...the production of timber" listed on page 2. On Wildlife Management Areas, option 3 may negatively impact the wildlife species desired.

Uneven age management, which is sometimes confused with thinning, is effective only with shade tolerant tree species. Therefore it has limited potential on the Erwin unit.

Even age harvests are the only effective regeneration system to manage the oak/hickory forest type which is predominant on the unit. (See also comment # 13).

Comment # 55: Timber which is cut down needs to be removed. Piles of downed trees are unsightly and present a fire hazard. This is especially true for trees piled near residential areas.

Reply: Piles of down trees do negatively impact the aesthetics of the area. Tops and log piles provide cover and denning sites for wildlife and increase the amount of coarse woody debris on ground, which is necessary for forest decomposition and addition of organic matter in the soil.

Comment # 56: Prohibit any logging in the area. The logging at Spencer Crest Nature center and the Erwin Mountain State Forest caused erosion by the use of heavy machinery and damage to trees not marked for logging seems extensive and makes it almost impossible to use the trails on foot.

Reply: A discussion of the reasons for harvesting are covered in comments # 54, # 57, and in the unit plan. Spencer Crest Nature Center is not managed by NYS DEC, and not a part of this unit management plan. There have been two harvests on Erwin Mountain State Forest in the past 10 years. There is no significant erosion caused by harvesting at Erwin Mountain State Forest. Road construction followed management guidelines. Ditches, culverts, geo-textile fabric were utilized to stabilize the site. There were no skid trails on slopes greater than 5%. Damage to residual trees was well within acceptable standards.

Comment # 57: Logging should not be the purpose of our public state land.

Reply: The legislation that authorizes the purchase of land by the state of New York ties that land to one or more purposes. The State Reforestation Law of 1929, and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931, authorized the "reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber, and for recreation and kindred purposes". The Park and Recreation Land Acquisition Act of 1960, and the Environmental Quality Bond Acts of 1972 and 1986 authorized the purchase of lands which would serve multiple purposes involving the conservation and development of natural resources, the preservation of scenic areas, watershed protection, forestry and recreation. Wildlife Management Areas were acquired primarily for the production and use of wildlife. What wildlife an area has, is dependent on what habitat is available for that wildlife to use. For example, many species require young forest stands with thousands of trees saplings per acre. The most cost effective way to get that habitat is to have loggers do a clearcut or shelterwood cut, removing the older trees and allow full sunlight on the seedlings for best re-growth.

Comment # 58: Timber harvests may invade the trail area, and may destroy the benefits of using footpaths.

Comment # 59: Preventing mature, marketable timber from succeeding to old growth, decadent woods achieves neither of the stated goals. Certain rare and endangered species need extensive climax habitat and without it biotic richness and completeness is below potential. The trees that would make up extensive old woods are not endangered (with the exception of American Chestnut). It is extensive and way-past-peak-logging habitat dominated by those trees that is endangered hereabouts. Correction: it is extinct. But it could be regenerated by the rather cheap expedient of doing nothing.

Comment # 60: Routinely downing trees as soon as they are money on the hoof is not helpful to the ecological system or our quality of life and is not necessary for the economic system. Manage for broad ecology.

Reply: NYS DEC harvests timber for a variety of reasons. Commercial timber sales are one of the primary tools for wildlife habitat management. The economic return from a timber sale is, generally speaking, dwarfed by the value of the habitat work which is done by the sale.

Comment # 61: Advise the public when logging operations will take place in management area.

Reply: The department will install a kiosk or two on the property as money becomes available. Information on timber harvests may be included in the information presented.

Comment # 62: Monitor gas drilling and pipe installations.

Comment # 63: I would better management of the oil and gas leasing. I witnessed large tractor trailers going at excessive speeds on the roads in Erwin Land Management Area and assume these were going to the gas wells in the area. Eliminate these leases as it is almost impossible to police this properly.

Reply: The Department does monitor and manage drilling activities on State properties, but also encourages

the public to notify the Department of any concerns, so that investigations and appropriate actions can be conducted.

Please note the following:

In New York State, all activity associated with oil and gas drilling, including production, are regulated by the NYSDEC Division of Mineral Resources to ensure compliance with Article 23 of the Environmental Conservation Law and 6NYCRR Part 550-559.

These regulations include site assessments for environmental impacts, and result in approval or denial of the siting of the well.

Approval to drill in New York State is only granted through a Drilling Permit that must be obtained prior to any oil and gas drilling operations are conducted. Specific terms and conditions are contained in that permit. Drilling and production operations, if approved, are monitored by State inspectors throughout the life of the well. Final inspections are performed to document the plugging of the well and reclamation of the well site.

It should be noted that pipelines greater than 1,000 feet in length and/or containing pressures greater than 125 pounds per square inch are regulated by the NYS Public Service Commission.

In addition, further oversight of oil and gas operations on State lands in this unit is conducted by the Division of Lands and Forests or the Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine. This oversight is conducted thru a Temporary Revocable Permit (TRP) that contains specific conditions to mitigate and/or control surface disturbances. A TRP (like a drilling permit) is obtained prior to any oil and gas activity on State lands contained in this unit management plan.

Comment # 64: This land should not be used for gas drilling. It is not fair to tax paying property owners bordering with state properties. Oil and gas exploration and drilling may destroy the benefits of using these footpaths. Gas drilling should not be the purpose of our public state land.

Reply: The State recognizes that there are property owners who are opposed to leasing their property for oil and gas exploration. The State also recognizes that there are property owners who are in favor of leasing their property for oil and gas exploration.

To facilitate these matters and any other concerns of the public, the Department holds a public meeting prior to leasing State lands for oil and gas exploration, followed by a thirty (30) day public comment period. The Department considers all comments prior to making a decision to lease or to not lease any State lands.

It should be noted that Article 23, Title 11, section 23-1101 of the Environmental Conservation Law and State Finance Law authorizes the Department of Environmental Conservation to make leases on behalf of the State for exploration, production and development of oil and gas on State lands.

When drilling is permitted in New York State, the drilling operations are subject to the NYS Conservation Law. In New York State, all activity associated with oil and gas drilling, including production, are regulated by the NYS DEC Division of Mineral Resources to ensure compliance with Article 23 of the Environmental Conservation Law and 6NYCRR Part 550-559. In regard to State lands that are leased and contained in this unit management plan, it is the policy of the department to exclude oil and gas operations in surface areas with sensitive resources such as stream banks, wetlands, steep slopes, rare and endangered species/communities, archeological/cultural sites, recreational trails and areas of intensive recreational use.

The current oil and gas lease agreements under Erwin WMA and Erwin Mountain State Forest contain areas that are excluded from oil and gas operations, and are delineated in the respective lease contract.

It should be noted that the current lease agreement under McCarthy Hill State Forest is a non-drilling lease which does not allow any surface use for oil and gas operations within this State Forest

In addition, further oversight of oil and gas operations on State lands in this unit is conducted by the Division of Lands and Forests or the Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine. This oversight is conducted thru a Temporary Revocable Permit (TRP) that contains specific conditions to mitigate

and/or control surface disturbances. A TRP (like a drilling permit) is obtained prior to any oil and gas activity on State lands contained in this unit management area.

Furthermore, the Department recognizes the potential environmental impacts associated with oil and gas operations and regulates these activities in permitted areas to remove and limit these impacts. The State's position is that oil and natural gas are valuable resources which can help provide energy and revenue to the citizens of New York. In addition, it is recognized that the drilling activity on State land is often an opportunity for improvements to the existing infrastructure of the State lands (such as improving safe and restricted access through upgrading existing roads, culverts and gates) and the creation of open space to enhance habitat diversity at no financial cost to the state. As with any human activity on State lands, oil and natural gas exploration and development can impact the environment. Most impacts are short term and occur during the siting and drilling phases of a well. Again, these activities are regulated and inspected by the State.

Comment # 65: Recent logging, with violations of best practice, left large gullies, resulting in unnatural runoff and roughening of trails. Drillers were allowed to abandon a deep gravel roadbed and a huge gravel platform, a violation of state law, which requires restoration of mined areas.

Reply: We disagree on violations of Best Management Practices on these sites. The Department believes that the recent logging was well conducted.

The trail system, while well known to the long time users, is not clearly designated. A key portion of this plan will be to designate the official trail system, which will allow us to know, to a certainty, which trails need to be protected.

The Department did allow the road bed and well pad constructed during the recent gas well drilling operations to be re-vegetated in place, rather than requiring their removal. We believe that requiring their removal would have caused greater environmental impact than allowing their re-vegetation in place. This area was not mined, gravel was brought to the site. This was an oil and gas extraction area.

The area in question was re-vegetated using a variety of species in the spring of 2007. We are still holding a performance bond for this site, and will continue to hold a bond, until the site is vegetated to the DEC's satisfaction.

Comment # 66: There is a constant fear is that the area will be "sold out" to gas and/or lumber and/or development interests. Having this undeveloped land is one of the great interests and attractions of this area.

Reply: The conservation and wise use of the state lands addressed in this plan permit the mineral resources to be utilized and the timber to be managed by harvesting. The challenge of land managers is to allow the wise use of these natural resources while protecting the other intrinsic resource values of the land. Rest assured that the area will not be "sold out" to outside interests, and the area shall remain undeveloped.

Comment # 67: Require commercial interests to "clean up" after themselves, return the land to a condition similar to the way it was before mining or drilling, and replanting with sufficient vegetation to prevent erosion.

Reply: We agree, within limits. Restoration, or clean up, needs to proceed within certain clearly defined limits.

If we are to build structures to support oil and gas operations or to conduct commercial timber sales, we will not be able to return the land to precisely the former condition.

Restoration needs to be conducted with a healthy dose of common sense and a realization that overly large restoration efforts may cause larger environmental impacts than a more even handed approach.

Comment # 68: The State should be vigilant in protecting against loss of this area - both in total number of acres, but also in value of acreage.

Comment # 69: Keep the land in its original state, no public park.

Comment # 70: Top goals of the UMP should be the preservation of existing wildlife corridors, undeveloped wooded areas, wetlands and water resources, native animal and plant species, and the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of open-space wilderness-style recreation areas; primarily minimal disturbance hiking trails, plus fishing and hunting grounds.

Comment # 71: I oppose incursion or further incursion into the Erwin Unit by natural gas drilling, new gas wells, timber harvesting, land clearing (except for fire breaks), road building, or for residential, commercial or industrial development.

Comment # 72: I oppose the clearing of Erwin Unit land for meadows, golf courses, picnic areas, parking lots, fishing access, camping areas, lean-tos, new roads, graded foot paths, logging, natural gas lines or drilling or natural gas wells, and all other uses.

Comment # 73: There is a strong need for keeping areas near our small upstate cities free of commercial development. These trails, wetlands, and ponds would serve many folks of the Corning-Painted Post area. There is also a high education value here.

Comment # 74: These lands should be re-categorized for a higher level of protection, such as state parkland, nature preserve or unique area. These lands are a large wilderness area with “backwoods character” embedded within the fastest-growing area in New York State.

Mailed Responses after the Public Meeting

The following is the text of the written comments received after the public meeting. Any received after May 26, 2007 are not included in this document. They are summarized and answered above.

Town of Erwin, 117 West Water Street, Painted Post, NY 14870

Provide good directional information to travelers so that they can find the access points.

Improve the parking areas.

Upgrade the trails with blazes and produce larger scale maps. We will incorporate your trail system into our final recommendations for linkages with the town-wide trail system.

Sue A. Poelvoorde, NYS OPRHP-Finger Lakes Region, 2221 Taughannock Park Road, Trumansburg, NY 14886

With respect to the McCarthy Hill State Forest segment, due to its proximity to OPRHP’s Pinnacle State Park, public access opportunities should be compatible with the management and operation of the golf course as the public will use the properties as one large unit. No off-road (ATVs, 4-wheelers(autos)) should be allowed for that reason.

George Dudick, Painted Post, NY

An available (unlocked) access to the Erwin Wildlife Management area pond is needed from the Painted Post area.

Consider the installation of a firing range in the Erwin Wildlife Management Area.

Bradley Q. & Elizabeth M. Kinsman, Painted Post, NY

Monitor gas drilling and pipe installations closely and frequently.
Advise us when logging operations, etc. are to take place in management area.
Open up on (up on top of ridge) for public recreation use and develop road access.

James W. Taylor, Painted Post, NY

Future management of the Erwin WMA should place more emphasis upon habitat enhancement and less upon timber, gas, vehicular access, etc. But we can't manage what we don't know. Are certain species in decline? Are invasive species increasing? Any plan must begin with a comprehensive census with wide use of such sources as hunters (the DEC's bow hunter sighting log for example), environmental organizations such as the Cornell lab of Ornithology and Audubon's local chapter. The job is huge but progress has already been made - littering and vandalism are down. We must continue to enhance and pass this local treasure on for the enjoyment of future generations.

Charles & Deanna Preston, Addison, NY

Timber Management: There are many theories on the subject so I would leave that up to environmentally-minded experts except to say choose contractors who tread lightly and do the least damage, and leave some areas untouched.

Public access: It is my wish that the gates be kept closed year round. I believe people who are serious about hunting, fishing or recreation are there partially for the exercise and don't mind walking, cycling or skiing in. Reserve access for the handicapped.

P.S.: I'm tired of picking up trash and seeing vandalism of the signs.

Don Scoloaro, Coopers Plains, NY

1. Computer operated gate to let registered residents enter to small game hunt and fish and hike. If they violate rules, take their code off.

2. Build more lean-tos for people to picnic and enjoy. (I'll build a couple)

3. Logging only to thin woods. The last loggers wrecked the woods.

Using a code system lets you know who is entering the woods.

The name explains it: Erwin Wildlife Management Area. Most all activities should revolve around its name. People should be able to spectate wildlife and enjoy nature and during hunting season be able to thin healthy populations of animals. All activities should be centered around animals (hesitate [sic]) habitat and the public's right to enjoy nature without upsetting the balance.

Howard Beye, Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Rochester, NY

The FLTC is in the process of trying to determine a potential trail route from the Six Nations area to near Addison. This route most likely will include the Erwin Wildlife Management Area and Erwin Mountain and McCarthy Hill State Forests and other public land. This proposed trail is part of an endeavor to connect the FLT to the Mid-State Trail in Pennsylvania.

In addition to the connection with the Mid-State Trail this new connector trail to be built in NY and PA will, as it moves south from the Mid-State Trail, ultimately connect with the Appalachian Trail. We also understand there is another plan in the works to make a parallel trail to the Appalachian Trail from mid-Alabama to our Adirondacks using a portion of the FLT.

As we move from these very beginning stages of planning we will be and keep in contact with the DEC so the latest information will be available for the Erwin Unit Management Plan.

Richard & Susan Curreri, Painted Post, NY

Open year round; Camping; Snowmobiling; 4-wheeling.

Dorothy Stevens, Waverly, NY

Are you sure of the lines on the Erwin Mountain State Forest?

Any information on value of properties or access to any surveys or aerial shots.

Anonymous

I would like to see the Erwin Wildlife Management Area to include snowmobiling. There is (are) trails to roads already there; it would benefit wildlife to use trails packed by snowmobiles.

Frank L. Thiel, Painted Post, NY

1. For all three parcels, create or recreate trails such as those that formerly existed in the Erwin WMA. The DEC website description is very outdated insofar as current conditions are concerned, but describes the features we would recommend.

2. Restrict vehicle access (including ATVs and snowmobiles).

3. Make use of the roads and clearing done by Fortuna Energy, i.e., do not require restoration to completely reproduce initial conditions.

Margaret M. Holmes, Painted Post, NY 14870

Historically the time I have spent on the land has been hiking, biking, and skiing, but not, usually, during deer hunting season. My personal interest is to be able to continue these activities. I.e., I hope the future includes plans for a multi-use area. My wishes would be for extra trail maintenance to make it more amicable for riding bikes. Please don't misunderstand; I don't envision a park. The lack of spit and polish is one of the area's greatest attractions.

The constant fear is that the area will be "sold out" to gas and/or lumber and/or development interests. Having this undeveloped land is (in my opinion) one of the great interests and attractions of this area. I understand that it only makes good economic sense to cut timber and extract minerals and gas. We who live in this area think it's vitally important to do so in an environmentally friendly fashion - and require the commercial interests to "clean up" after themselves. I'm not sufficiently conversant with environment concerns to define this well, but it should certainly include returning the land to a condition similar to the way it was before mining or drilling, and replanting with sufficient vegetation to prevent erosion.

Having seen one developer offer to swap developable land for the near-vertical hillside near Coopers, I do hope that the State will be vigilant in protecting against loss of this area - both in total number of acres, but also in value of acreage - value for recreational users such as myself, as well as the number of people who hunt in this area.

The map you mailed shows a trail from near the US-15/17 intersection to the location of the old fire tower. I may be mistaken, but I think much of that trail (over private land) is closed and the Scouts and other citizens are no longer using it. If these comments can contain "pie-in-the-sky" wishes, it certainly would be nice to see that hiking corridor opened again.

In summary, my interests are to keep the areas open to hunting, hiking, biking, and skiing. My fears are that land may be destroyed or lost to commercial interests. I would be happy to talk to you in more detail if it would be of value to you.

James B & Linda S. Stamatoff, Painted Post, NY

Timber which is cut down needs to be removed. Piles of downed trees are unsightly and present a fire hazard. This is especially true for trees piled near residential areas.

James D. Salley, Painted Post, NY

The land could be used for hunting and fishing that's ok. NO public parks in there. Keep the land in its original state. We have too few forests left as you can see right here in Gang Mills. Deer control and the coydogs with mange should be taken care of but we don't need any more woods cut down for progress. I realize dead wood should be taken care of, has taken wood out when trees were marked years ago.

P.S. There's rattlers there and don't need (sic) need everybody wandering through there. What would happen with a park.

Steven Acomb, Painted Post, NY

Being a property owner and leasing property bordering state land, I would have a great deal of interest in the plans. We already have a great deal of problems with trespassing and damage to property, mostly coming from ATVs and also from illegal hunting, dumping, etc.

I (we) would have a great deal of concern with any additional access, without state assistance in policing of the state property and adjoining properties.

Of course I am very concerned with gas drilling on state owned land, not only because this land should not be used for these purposes, but because it is also not fair to tax paying property owners bordering with state properties.

Last, but not least, would like to see state land better identified; the excuse we hear most often is "we thought we were on state land" when we encounter trespassers. Although I know it would be a lot of work, I believe the boundaries should be cut or bulldozed all along the perimeters. This would also be very helpful in cases of forest fires. Possibly this work could be done by youth groups hired for summer work (as took place approx. 25 years ago in the Erwin Wildlife Management Area).

Jo Wildeman, Painted Post, NY

Some observations I would like you to consider during your planning phase:

The trails that are kept cut back are fantastic! We enjoy the use of all the trails and the ease in which we can enjoy our outings with small children (the trails make it family friendly). However, one frustration we have is that each trail rarely connects to the next - the main cuts (traveling North to South up the hill, and we call fire breaks) are connected, but at the top of the hill off the access road those paths generally do not connect for a more circular path. For example, it would be nice to be able to continue the walk past the beaver pond and connect with another path further around the hill.

An often wished-for item would be a trail map. We have searched the Erwin Town Hall, asked around the neighborhood, and now we even have started using GPS to start creating our own map of the trails. An idea of distance and adjacent paths would be a useful tool for our expedition.

One improvement our family would personally enjoy would be access to the property for horse trailers. We have horses boarded at a near-by facility and would enjoy a days outing and trail riding. We currently must travel to Sugar Hill or Hector for trail riding. Perhaps there is an area which is accessible to horse trailers, and we just don't know about it yet. If we could access the area, 4-H groups like ours and other individuals should be able to enjoy the area as well, without the issue of distance.

Without knowing much about the wildlife management, timbering and gas leases, I am hesitant to comment on that aspect of the letter. I know gas drilling has become a part of our area, as well as harvesting the timber. I would be hesitant to comment on the leasing of rights for gas because I really don't have a lot of knowledge about that program. I do know what I have seen after an area was timbered and it was almost not even useable based on the limbs and debris left lying on the ground. (Perhaps we saw an area which did not have certain restrictions placed on the timbering company). I would personally feel concerned about the impact on the land and how the use of the property would change if the gas lease and timbering were permitted. Again, I would like to learn more.

David S. Marsh and Howard Beye, FLTC, 6111 Visitor Center Road, Mt. Morris, NY 14510:

It has come to our attention that the DEC is in the process of developing a Unit Management Plan for the Erwin Unit, which includes the Erwin Wildlife Management Area, Erwin State Forest, and McCarthy Hill State Forest. We also understand that one of the objectives of the UMP is “to work with current and future volunteer groups to enhance the area, including recreational opportunities such as the Finger Lakes Trail...”. Therefore, we would like to confirm for the record a trail development plan we are actively working on and request that the UMP incorporate language that would allow a branch of the Finger Lakes Trail to pass through the Erwin Unit.

As background, we would like to bring attention to the fact that the Finger Lakes Trail (FLT) is a nationally recognized long distance hiking trail that crosses many State Forests within New York State. The Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC), an organization composed of over 400 volunteers, feels privileged to have use of public lands for the FLT. The Great Eastern Trail (GET) is a new north-south footpath that is under development running from Alabama to join the main FLT somewhere near South Bradford. The GET plan is to connect already existing trail systems where they exist and provide an alternative long distance hiking trail to the Appalachian Trail. The FLTC is committed to build a connection from the FLT to the Pennsylvania border to meet the Mid State Trail as part of the GET development plan. This connecting trail will be a branch trail of the FLT and maintained by the FLTC as part of its trail system. It appears highly desirable for this new branch trail to pass through portions of the Erwin Unit. We believe the GET will provide an exciting and valuable asset to the communities of the greater Corning area and the Erwin Unit.

The new trail as part of the GET and FLT promises to provide endless enjoyment to residents and tourists, through hikers and day-hikers young and old, birders, those who enjoy nature, and those who just wish to escape the daily routine and enjoy what the beautiful natural world of New York State has to offer. The surrounding environment in a natural state is therefore critical for all users of these trail systems. Significant intrusions that alter the natural state of the forest and create noise and destruction to habitat that is disturbing to wildlife and human enjoyment severely reduces the value of the trail as an experience that people seek. Such intrusions include: (a) Oil and gas exploration and drilling as well as timber harvests that invade the trail area can, if not designed sympathetically, effectively destroy the benefits of using these footpaths. (b) Motorized recreational vehicles, such as snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles (ATV), etc., not only disrupt the natural setting trail-users desire, but also can harmfully affect the trail tread (e.g. erosion, “puddling”, unnecessary widening, destruction of vegetation, etc.) severely damaging the work of volunteer trail maintainers. (c) Horse traffic and mountain bikes, although not motorized or noisy, seriously damage the trail surface. Therefore, we feel it useful to offer the following requests for your consideration and use in developing the Erwin UMP:

1. Trail Use – The FLTC would like the opportunity to develop a **footpath** within the Erwin Unit **wherein all other uses of such trail would be prohibited** and with such requirements clearly identified with appropriately placed and esthetically designed signs. Should it be necessary for the FLT Branch/GET to be routed, or in the future rerouted, to utilize existing trails that currently have other specified restrictions, then those requirements would not be expected to be altered.
2. Trail Identification – The FLT Branch/GET trail would be clearly identified preferably with orange blazes. Other trails that cross or utilize a portion of the trail should be separately and clearly identified to avoid confusion for the user.
3. Trail Access – Points of access should be protected from intrusion by unauthorized users.
4. Route Protection – the FLT Branch/GET track should be protected from disruption during any timber harvests, oil and gas exploration, and oil and gas drilling. This would entail assuring that the actual track is not disturbed and that a natural barrier on all sides of the trail is retained to shield the user as much as possible from an altered natural state. A lesser desirable alternative is to provide a reroute for the trail that will maintain the desired natural environment.
5. Structures – Structures such as foot bridges, parking areas, and lean-tos can significantly enhance the user’s experience whether a day user or through hiker and should be considered when establishing the trail route.

The FLTC has enjoyed the long term support and cooperation from the various DEC Regions across the State and specifically from your office in Region 8. We hope our thoughts will be useful to you and your associates in finalizing the Erwin UMP and extend our sincere appreciation for the opportunity to comment.
[Ed. Note - attached map not included in this document.]

Duane Edwards (phoned in comment):

Erwin WMA should be open for turkey season; is featured in many hunting magazines as a good place to hunt.

Tom Johnson, Great Eastern Trail:

On behalf of the Great Eastern Trail (GET) Coordinating Committee, I would like to submit comments for the record in advance of your public meetings to discuss the Unit Management Plan for the Erwin Unit, which I understand incorporates three separate State parcels.

The Great Eastern Trail Coordinating Committee was formed to coordinate the efforts of trail clubs through ten states, and to make decisions about the trail routing. It consists of two components. One, the Mid-Atlantic Foot Trails Coalition (MAFTC), was formed to manage the new trail from southwest Virginia to New York. MAFTC, as its name implies, is a cooperative arrangement of trail organizations (Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Mid State Trail Association, Standing Stone Trail Club, Inc., and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Inc.) That have agreed "to work together to bring about a new long distance trail" named the Great Eastern Trail (GET). Many additional organizations are also providing assistance, to include the American Hiking Society, federal, state and local governments. The GET Coordinating Committee is now applying for 501©3 as a not for profit corporation.

The idea for a trail like the GET has its roots in Benton McKaye's original 1921 proposal for the Appalachian Trail. There is a great amount of enthusiasm for the GET and it is building as the plans for the trail become more widely known. More information about the GET may be found at www.greateastertrail.org.

The GET is currently being aggressively developed and will both utilize and connect existing trail systems where they exist from Alabama into New York State where it will join the Finger Lakes Trail (FLT). The MAFTC has two gaps to fill between existing trail systems, and one of those gaps is between the main FLT and the Mid State Trail. The Finger Lakes Trail Conference has agreed to build a portion of this connecting trail to reach the New York/Pennsylvania line and it now appears highly desirable for this trail segment to pass through portions of the Erwin Unit. The MAFTC supports the efforts of and values expressed by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference with specific regard to the development of the trail connection assigned to them. In that regard, we agree with the FLTC that:

1. The goal of the GET is to be a foot path, with use by motorized vehicles strictly prohibited. We all know what trail and environmental damage may be caused by such conveyances. Should it be desirable or necessary for an existing trail to be used and that trail is currently multi use, such previously specified uses will be accepted and honored.
2. The surrounding environment should be maintained in a natural state to provide the enjoyment sought by authorized trail users. Activities such as logging and drilling for oil and gas if not managed properly can potentially destroy not only the tread of the trail but also the natural state of the trail corridor. If such activities are conducted within the Erwin Unit, sufficient natural barriers should be maintained to minimize disruption to the trail. The trail should be afforded the protection and courtesy earned as an important asset of the State of New York and its communities.
3. The trail must be clearly marked to distinguish it from other trails and easily guide the user.
4. Trail entrances should be identified with signs.
5. Parking areas, lean-tos, bridges, and bivouac areas are amenities that enhance the enjoyment of not only the long distance hiker but also the day user.

I know the FLTC will work cooperatively with you to find the best trail route within the Erwin Unit and appreciate the opportunity to offer the comments of the MAFTC members. We look forward to the day when

the Great Eastern Trail will be as widely known as the Appalachian Trail and that hikers on this connecting trail will be enjoying the beauty of New York State.

Michael Gildea, Painted Post, NY:

I have the following comments regarding the proposal for management of Erwin Wildlife Management Area.

1. I would encourage the prohibition of any logging in the area. I have watched the logging that has gone on at Spencer Crest Nature center and the Erwin Mountain State Forest. The erosion caused by the use of heavy machinery as well as the damage to trees not marked for logging seems very extensive and makes it almost impossible to use the trails on foot. Also, at Spencer Crest in particular, there are still copious amounts of orange plastic tape remaining which I assume were used to mark the logging trees.
2. I would also like to see better management of the oil and gas leasing. I have witnessed large tractor trailers going at excessive speeds on the roads in Erwin Land Management Area. I assume these are going to the gas wells in the area. It would seem to me that you should consider eliminating these leases as I suspect it is almost impossible to police this properly.
3. I hope you will severely restrict the access for motorized wheeled vehicles, including snowmobiles. It seems like every time I see access allowed for vehicles in the land management areas in the region, the terrain is destroyed and severe erosion results. I am not sure why hunting and fishing requires motorized wheeled vehicle access anymore than hiking and biking.
4. Finally, I wonder if it would be possible to post hunting schedules and rules at the main access points. I am usually aware of deer hunting season but there seem to be many other times when people are hunting in the area.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion.

Mary Hood, Bath, NY:

I am writing as a resident of Steuben County regarding public comment on the Unit Management Plan for Erwin EMC.

I would like to say that I believe the best use of that area is to remain as public recreation. I believe that logging, gas drilling and development should not be the purpose of our public state land. These activities should be kept at a minimum.

I have used the area for hikes for some years and gone bird watching there. There is a bald eagle (a pair) that probably has a nest in the area but I've not been able to locate it.

Noel Sylvester

I/we support the Erwin Management Plan, and encourage you guys to do what you do best.

Bradley L. Turner, Corning, NY

Please accept my input on the DEC Draft Management Plan for the Erwin Unit as follows:

I support the plan's goals of ensuring biological integrity, improvement and protection of the unit.

Due to incursions into our precious New York State DEC Region 8 undeveloped areas by residential development, exploitation of natural gas resources, commercial and industrial development and timber harvesting, the delicate balance between human activities and wildlife is threatened.

Not only does appropriate balance between human "footprints" on the land, and undeveloped land enhance the quality of life for citizens of New York, it also enhances the regional economy. The greater Corning-Painted Post area, including all of Southeast Steuben County, depends on its environmental and cultural resources to attract both tourists and highly skilled & professional workers. Cultural resources in our area are dependent on the community of artists and artisans, scholars, teachers and others who choose to live

here, in large measure due to the natural beauty of the area.

Therefore, I believe and urge that the top goal of the DEC Draft Management Plan for the Erwin Unit (hereafter referred to as the Erwin Unit Plan) should be the preservation of existing wildlife corridors, undeveloped wooded areas, wetlands & water resources and native animal and plant species. Another top-priority goal should be the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of open-space wilderness-style recreation areas; primarily minimal disturbance hiking trails, plus fishing and hunting grounds.

To that end I oppose any incursion or further incursion into the Erwin Unit by natural gas drilling, new gas wells, timber harvesting, land clearing (except for fire breaks), road building, or for residential, commercial or industrial development.

I support the designation and marking of minimum disturbance, non-graded wilderness-style hiking trails.

I oppose the creation of new wheelchair/visual impairment access trails in the Erwin unit, except where those trails are situated adjacent to existing parking areas, or new parking areas adjacent to but outside the borders of the Erwin Unit lands. Given that, I do support creation of not more than two wheelchair/visual impairment access trails, each no more than 3/4 mile long (with a construction disturbance area of no more than 10-feet wide), within the Erwin Unit.

I oppose the clearing of Erwin Unit land for meadows, golf courses, picnic areas, parking lots, fishing access, camping areas, lean-tos, new roads, graded foot paths (except as noted in the preceding paragraph, for wheelchair access), logging, natural gas lines or drilling or natural gas wells, and all other uses.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, I support the creation of not more than two lean-tos and small primitive campsites within the Erwin Unit if and only if these sites are part of a larger trail or trail system that extends beyond Erwin Unit lands and into other parts of New York or beyond.

Thank you for your time and attention, and for including these comments in the Erwin Unit Management Plan development & approval process.

Monika Wood

I am writing in regard to plans of putting in a new trail in the Erwin Game Management Area. The trail would have improved trail markings and link up with other trail systems such as Finger Lakes trail system and the Midstates.

I very much support this plan. This area is a major asset to the people living in this area. It provides excellent hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing opportunities. My family and friends enjoy spending time there enjoying the views, the ponds and the wildlife. We use the area frequently for recreation and enjoy its natural beauty. More and improved trails would rise awareness of this valuable resource and even more people would use its trails. Many wetlands are disappearing, causing many problems. It's important to preserve as many natural areas as we can. It would be a real shame to develop this area for more destructive uses. It is most valuable as a recreation area for hikers and skiers. By furthering this kind of use, we would also preserve the plants, animals and ecosystems of this area for many generations to come and be able to enjoy.

I strongly support preserving and improving the trail system. I am against any destructive development such as logging and drilling in this area.

Thank you for considering my input.

Paul Danielson, Corning, NY

I have heard that there might be an opportunity to enhance the Erwin GMA by improving trails and avoiding non-recreational uses for the land. I think that would be a great idea, since protecting public lands having the attractive features of the Erwin GMA will become a quality of life issue as development continues in the Town of Erwin area. I hope your plans for the GMA will focus on the recreational needs of the residents in this part of Steuben County.

Richard Hurley

I am writing to you today to ask for your help in preserving and improving the best, largest public access outdoor recreation area in the Corning-Painted Post area. This is the Erwin Game Management Area, or "Erwin Game lands". This area adjoins Woodland Park residential in Gang Mills. It is on a hilltop location, spreading all the way to Coopers (Smith Hill Road) in the West. The area includes nearly 2500 acres.

There is a strong need for keeping some areas located near our small upstate cities free of commercial development. These trails, wetlands, and ponds would serve many folks of the Corning-Painted Post area due to proximity. I am sure New York State agrees that there is a high priority in preserving such habitats. There is also a high education value here.

Thank you for your time and considerations on this issue.

James C. Trondsen, Painted Post, NY

I am writing in response to the Unit Management Plan for the Erwin Wildlife Management Area and the Erwin State Forest.

The Town of Erwin has long been the fastest-growing and most progressive area in Steuben County. Due to the impending completion of the junction of two Interstate highways in Erwin, this area may be the fastest-growing area in New York State. I believe that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to preserve recreational open space for thousands of nearby residents and future residents.

The Erwin WMA is my favorite hiking area. It has many miles of trails, stunning wetlands and ponds, varied terrain, and due to its hilltop location, commanding vistas of the Cohocton and the Tioga river valleys. Due to its size, it offers the opportunity to hike some real distance, approaching ten miles, using the many interconnecting trails. And it is just a few minutes drive from my home in Gang Mills.

Erwin WMA is regularly used for recreation. The Three Rivers Outing Club, with over one hundred local members, regularly schedules hikes in the Erwin WMA. And the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Mid States Trail Association, and Great Eastern Trail Association have identified the Erwin WMA as a desirable location for a section of a long-distance footpath extending to Florida. I believe that the highest, best and most important use for Erwin WMA in the future will be for recreation.

Large areas of the Erwin WMA are still relatively pristine. However, recently I have seen these lands permanently disfigured by destructive logging and gas drilling.

The gas drilling was fruitless, leaving two dry wells. Following the latest drilling attempt, the drillers were allowed to abandon a deep gravel roadbed and a huge gravel platform. This lifeless field of gravel is a major barrier to the connectivity of the wilderness habitat, and permanently disfiguring. This is a clear violation of state law, which requires restoration of mined areas.

Some recent logging, with several violations of best practice, has left large gullies, resulting in unnatural runoff and roughening of trails.

I believe that these lands must be protected from such destructive practices. May I suggest that these lands be recategorized for a higher level of protection, such as state parkland, nature preserve or unique area? The lands are certainly unique in that they are a large wilderness area with "backwoods character" embedded within the fastest-growing area in New York State. This may be our last chance to preserve this local treasure.

Andrew Heiman, Painted Post, NY

I am writing you to comment on the Unit Management Plan for the Erwin EMC (sic). I would like to voice my support for a plan that will protect the Erwin EMC for public recreation such as hiking, fishing, and biking. As a resident of Painted Post, I have visited the Erwin WMA several times to hike, fish, and bike. I have taken my son their and out of town visitors. The Erwin WMA is a unique public resource that should be preserved for public use.

George Kosmaler, Elmira, NY

The Elmira *Star-Gazette* article, April 24, 2007, stated that the plan includes "... protection of rare and endangered species of plants and animals [and] enhancement of wildlife species diversity".

The implication is that results would fulfill the vision by following the principles of sustained yield forestry with the one concession of allowing some harvested land to be kept as grassland.

Preventing mature, marketable timber from succeeding to old growth, decadent woods achieves neither of the stated goals. Certain rare and endangered species need extensive climax habitat and without it biotic richness and completeness is below potential. The trees that would make up extensive old woods are not endangered (with the exception of American Chestnut). It is extensive and way-past-peak-logging habitat dominated by those trees that is endangered hereabouts. Correction: it is extinct. But it could be regenerated by the rather cheap expedient of doing nothing.

Foresters generally look upon allowing team growth as wasteful whereas selective logging capitalizes when trees have reached the point of diminishing economic returns. Managing for broad ecology or beauty is just plain impractical.

Theodore Roosevelt, an economist and a co-founder of modern forestry, said something like, “in the long run, nothing is more practical than preserving beauty.” Clearly, “practical” embraces “economic” and long-term excels short-term. And I don’t think many users of forest products (i.e., everyone) would not agree that miles of big, old trees is one of nature’s prettiest sights and wandering in a woods big enough to exclude sounds from outside all day is one of nature’s most enthralling experiences and would mind paying for the opportunity either in taxes or admissions.

For a long time, maximizing the potential of the logging industry has provided a material essential to the economy. Essential to a wasteful economy is an oxymoron. Trees are cut down and, in effect, just shipped off to the landfill and at great energy expense. Is logging (like coca farming in Bolivia) essential to the local economy what with heavy equipment and computerized machinery replacing lumberjacks and mill hands?

Clearly, routinely downing trees as soon as they are money on the hoof is not helpful to the ecologic system or our quality of life and is not necessary for the economic system (greed is not necessity).

Appendix C : Taxes

School and Town general taxes

State Forest lands and multiple use areas less than 3000 acres acquired using monies from the Park and Recreation Land Acquisition Bond act of 1960 are not subject to real property taxes. Both State Forest were acquired using 1960 bond act funds and are not subject to property taxes.

Wildlife Management Areas are not subject to real property taxes except where special arrangements have been made at the time of acquisition.

Appendix D : Facilities

Unpaved Roads

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Miles</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	1.0
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0.0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>5.25</u>
	Total	6.25

Ponds/pot Holes

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	2 ponds (natural)
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>2 ponds, 15 potholes, 1 wetland</u>
	Total	4 ponds, 15 potholes, 1 wetland

Unpaved Parking Lots

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	2
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>9</u>
	Total	11

Facility ID Signs

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	2
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>10</u>
	Total	12

Metal Gates

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	1
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>14</u>
	Total	15

Access for Persons with Disabilities Trails

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Miles</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	1.0
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0.0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>3.5</u>
	Total	4.5

Regulation Signs

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	0
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>7</u>
	Total	7

Kiosks

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	1
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>0</u>
	Total	1

Cross County Ski Trails

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Miles</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	7.0
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0.0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>0.0</u>
	Total	7.0

Hiking Trails

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Miles</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	0.0
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0.0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>15.0</u>
	Total	15.0

Nesting Boxes

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	0
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	0
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>12 wood duck boxes, 16 blue bird boxes</u>
	Total	28

Gas Wells

	<u>Site</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.	McCarthy Hill State Forest	0
2.	Erwin Mountain State Forest	1(plugged and abandoned)
3.	Erwin Wildlife Management Area	<u>5</u> (3 plugged and abandoned)
	Total	6

Appendix E: Water Resources

WIN - Watershed Index Number: Numbering system used by NYSDEC to identify individual streams/ponds/lakes.

Water Classifications

Class C - Fishing and any other usages except for bathing or as a source of water supply for drinking, culinary, or food processing purposes.

Class C(T) - Same as Class C plus it is designated as trout waters

Class C(TS) - Same as Class C plus waters are suitable for trout spawning

Erwin Wildlife Management Area

Streams

NAME	WIN	MILES(approx)	CLASS	FISHERIES RESOURCE
Weaver Hollow br	PA-3-57-1	1.3	C	Minnows
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-57-1-2	0.6	C	Minnows
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-57-1-4	<0.1	C	Minnows
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-57-1-5	0.6	C	Minnows
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-58-4	0.8	C	Minnows
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-58-5	0.4	C	Minnows

Ponds

NAME	WIN	ACRES(approx)	CLASS	FISHERIES RESOURCE
Erwin Pond	PA-3-57-1-P23b	10.0	C	Bass/sunfish/bullhead

Erwin Mountain State Forest

Streams

NAME	WIN	MILES(approx)	CLASS	FISHERIES RESOURCE
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-57-4	0.8	C	Minnows

McCarthy Hill State Forest

Streams

NAME	WIN	MILES	CLASS	FISHERIES RESOURCE
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-57-5-2	<0.1	C	Minnows
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-57-6	2.1	C	Minnows
Unnamed Trib	PA-3-57-6-1	0.6	C	Minnows

Appendix F : Timber Management

See also maps on pages 100-101.

Stands (with trees) Designated Protection Management

McCarthy Hill State Forest
Steuben RA#21

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	3	74

Erwin Mountain State Forest
Steuben RA#20

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	20	7

Erwin Wildlife Management Area

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	7	75
B	1	8

Stands Designated Even Aged

McCarthy Hill State Forest
Steuben RA#21

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	1	10
A	2	12
A	4	66
A	5	58
A	6	24
A	7	152
A	8	59
A	9	39
A	10	118
A	11	24
A	12	55
A	13	18
A	14	54

Erwin Mountain State Forest
Steuben RA#20

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	1	20
A	2	3
A	3	25
A	4	106
A	5	7
A	6	7
A	7	3
A	8	77
A	9	48
A	10	5
A	11	3
A	12	12
A	14	7
A	15	68
A	16	30
A	17	18
A	18	16
A	19	20
A	21	7

Erwin Wildlife Management Area

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	1	42
A	2	7
A	3	15
A	4	14
A	5	468
A	6	31
A	9	140
A	10	184
A	11	127
A	12	37
A	13	17
A	14	75
A	15	56
A	16	13
A	17	51
A	18	302
A	19	310
B	2	32
C	2	15
C	3	4
C	4	10
C	5	3
C	6	41
C	7	4

Stands Designated Uneven Aged

McCarthy Hill State Forest
Steuben RA#21

none

Erwin Mountain State Forest
Steuben RA#20

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	22	15

Erwin Wildlife Management Area

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	8	136

Stands Designated Plantation Management

McCarthy Hill State Forest
Steuben RA#21

none

Erwin Mountain State Forest
Steuben RA#20

none

Erwin Wildlife Management Area

none

Stands Designated Open Land

McCarthy Hill State Forest
Steuben RA#21

none

Erwin Mountain State Forest
Steuben RA#20

none

Erwin Wildlife Management Area

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	950	9
A	951	1
A	952	3
A	953	7

Stands Designated Seedling / Sapling

McCarthy Hill State Forest
Steuben RA#21

none

Erwin Mountain State Forest
Steuben RA#20

none

Erwin Wildlife Management Area

Compartment	Stand	Acres
A	20	7
A	21	15
A	22	17
A	25	6
A	26	20
A	27	38
A	28	8
B	3	22
C	1	1