

**Summary of Public Comments on
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

Modification of Working Forest Conservation Easements
Held by DEC on Lands Owned by Heartwood Forestland Fund III, LP
- Franklin 231B; St. Lawrence 239B & 246B; Lewis 207B -

DEC received a total of 78 emails and letters on the DEIS for the “Modification of Working Forest Conservation Easements held by DEC on Lands owned by Heartwood Forestland Fund III, LP.” The DEIS was noticed in DEC’s Environmental Notice Bulletin (ENB) on November 11, 2009 and subsequently on November 25, 2009. A forty-eight (48) day comment period was provided, closing on December 28, 2009.

Seventy-three (73) of the total 78 letters expressed support for the proposed action. A majority of the support letters came from current camp lessees and club lessee members. Letters expressing concern over the proposed action were received from New York’s Adirondack Park environmental organizations.

The following is a summary of the substantive comments pulled from these letters and DEC’s response to each of these comments. Many comments within various letters were similar in nature and have been responded to in a combined response, which are noted before the response statement.

ECL 49-0301 & 0307

1. **Comment:** The proposed modifications do not meet the requirement of ECL 49-0307 (3) (d) that, “after a public hearing, the DEC Commissioner, makes a finding that the original Easement terms can no longer meet the original purpose of the Heartwood conservation easement or any of the purposes set forth in ECL Article 49-0301.”
2. **Comment:** The proposed modifications will result in increased environmental and aesthetic impacts on the adjoining Forest Preserve and the Easements lands, nor does the DEIS provide substantial burden of proof that modification of the Easement terms no longer meets the original purpose of the Champion Easements as provided under ECL section 49-0307 (d).

Combined Response (1 - 2): *The proposed modifications are being made pursuant to ECL 49-0307 (3) (a), not ECL 49-0307 (3)(d). ECL 49-0307 (3) (a) allows for the modification or extinguishment of a conservation easement “as provided in the instrument creating the easement...” See Appendix D, 1999 Easements - “Terms & Conditions 19, providing “this Easement may be amended by the parties hereto by mutual agreement in writing, executed by both parties and recorded in the Clerk’s office, or in accordance with the provisions of Section 49-0307 of the Environmental Conservation Law.”*

As required under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), ECL Article 8 and 6 NYCRR Part 617, DEC has evaluated the purpose and impacts of the proposed action and believes the FEIS meets the requirement of SEQR. Though not required under ECL 49-0307(3)(a), DEC believes the FEIS has sufficiently demonstrated why the proposed action supports the Easements’ original purposes, in addition to the purposes set forth in ECL section 49-0301, one of which is the development and improvement of the State’s forest lands as being fundamental to “...the balanced economic growth and quality of life in all areas of the state.”

Intention of the “Champion” Conservation Easements

3. **Comment:** As demonstrated in 1999, there was significant state interest in gaining long-term ecological security over the Northern Forest park lands, waters, wetlands and rivers. The interest in the future of these 110,000 acres remains a clear, statewide interest and, at minimum, warrants legislative public hearings across the State to enable appropriate public understanding, review and comment.

Response: In 1999, significant state interest in the Champion acquisition was due largely to it being one of New York's largest acquisitions of certain development and public rights on private timberlands through a conservation easement. Modification of certain terms and rights in the Easements remains consistent with the State's Open Space Conservation Plan (OSCP) priority project "Working Forest Conservation Easements," which the Easements were purchased under (see also response to comment 4, below). Long-term ecological security, though important, is not the main purpose of this project category or state program, as it is with projects intended for Forest Preserve designations. The purchase of 29,000 acres in fee along the river corridors that were added to the Forest Preserve was for the main purpose of protecting the long-term ecological integrity of major wetlands and northern flow rivers, while providing certain public recreational opportunities.

In regards to legislative hearings, the proposed action does not require legislative action and therefore legislative public hearings would not be deemed appropriate. However, if and when the action is completed, DEC will provide a public information meeting to address the new camp lease restrictions, along with the valuation process used to ensure the equal value exchange of public benefits, resulting in Heartwood's conveyance of 2,708 acres of fee lands to The People of the State of New York, in exchange for the continuation of their camp leasing rights.

4. **Comment:** The main purpose of the original purchase of fee and conservation easements from Champion International was to protect the ecological and aesthetic resources of the Oswegatchie, South Branch of the Grass, St. Regis and Deer Rivers; and to provide recreational use of these rivers.

Response: The principal objective of the Easements are: "...to perpetuate, as a sustainable working forest, the productive forest resources on the Protected Property; to encourage the long-term, professional management of those forest resources; and to facilitate the biologically and economically sustainable production of forest resources, while minimizing the impacts on water quality, scenic benefits, wildlife habitat, recreational and other conservation values" (Sections II.B. and V.A.).

Further, it must be emphasized that two separate real estate transactions occurred under the "Champion deal":

- i) the purchase of full fee title of 29,000 acres of Champion timber properties along the South Branch of the Grasse River, Main and East Branch of the St. Regis Rivers, and Madawaska Bog, under the "Northern Flow Rivers" OSCP priority project, where all camps were removed, and where the lands were added to the Forest Preserve for the main purpose of protecting the valuable water and recreational resources on the Champion properties; and
- ii) the purchase of 110,000 acres of certain sustainable forestry, commercial development and public recreational rights under the "Working Forest Conservation Easements" OSCP priority project with the principal purpose of maintaining the economic longevity and sustainable productivity of New York's long-standing, timber harvesting industry within the Adirondack region, where The People of the State of New York own only certain rights on the 110,000 acres, and where the property remains in private ownership.

5. **Comment:** The South Branch of the Grasse River was an important natural resource debate at the time of the original Easements. The removal of the camps was one of the provisions to help buffer and protect the river corridor over the long-term, a key objective of the Easements.

Response: The South Branch of the Grasse River is protected by State Forest Preserve lands, acquired in the 1999 acquisition. The South Branch is a classified river under Article 15-2711 of the ECL. It is classified as "Scenic" from the eastern edge of the property to Clarksboro and "Recreational" from there to the western boundary of the property. Any proposals for use and development therefore must abide by the State's rules and regulations associated with the "Scenic" and "Recreational" river designations. Within the Adirondack Park, the protection of these rivers on private lands falls under the

Adirondack Park Agency (APA) jurisdiction which enforces restrictions on the placement of new structures on private lands and minimizes the impacts of facilities such as trails, parking lots, signage, etc., on the surrounding Park resources.

6. **Comment:** Recreational use of private leased hunting camps is not one of the primary goals or intent of the original Champion working forest easements. Instead, it runs counter to the expressed purposes of sustainable forestry, resource and wildlife protection, scenic benefits and public recreational use.

Response: *DEC disagrees. The FEIS demonstrates that the proposed modification to allow the camps to remain supports the Easements' principal objective, and where the landowner retains the right to conduct forest management activities, defined as, "...the right to manage the protected property to meet landowner objectives for forest products consistent with the terms of this Easement, including the right to ... allow for forest related recreation activities (including, but not limited to hunting, fishing...)."*

Though evaluated under separate state rules and regulations, APA has made a similar determination on the appropriateness of the camps remaining on the working forest easements in Project Permit 2010-298 (paragraphs 72 & 73) issued to Heartwood on April 20, 2011:

"72. The proposal to allow hunt club camps to continue to remain on the project site, subject to short term (three year) license agreements with the landowner, would be consistent with the historic use of these timber management lands. It would also be compatible with the "character descriptions" and "purposes, policies and objectives" for those land use areas listed in sections 805 (3) (f) and (g) of the [APA] Act..."

"73. Hunting and fishing cabins are listed as compatible uses in section 805 (3) in the Resource Management and Rural Use land areas involved....The camps are grouped along existing roads and trails and are of very limited density, given the 110,000 acre size of the project site. The camps and the one acre privacy areas [camp envelopes] surrounding them are predominately located within areas already disturbed by roads and trails..."

7. **Comment:** In order to protect the Northern Rivers within the Forest Preserve, DEC should seek more than 100' setbacks for camps on all rivers, lakes, ponds and wetlands.

Response: *DEC has confidence that the (total) ½ mile Forest Preserve corridors (29,000 acres), acquired in the 1999 acquisition, sufficiently provides a buffer to the significant rivers and wetlands on the Heartwood properties. APA, which is responsible for the administration of the State's Freshwater Wetlands Act and Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act provisions on private lands, conveys equal confidence in their approval of Heartwood's application for Project Permit 2010-298, which states, "...these "Fee land" one quarter mile wide corridors [on each side of the river] provide exemplary protection for river waters" (Appendix H, APA Project Permit 2010-98, paragraph 59). DEC believes the corridors, in addition to the 100' setbacks provided in the proposed modifications on the Easement lands and required in the APA Project Permit, sufficiently protects the water resources (see also response to comment 8, below).*

8. **Comment:** The proposed modifications should require protection of broad riparian buffers, along all streams.

Response: *The original Easements (see Appendix D), Terms and Conditions 4.b. "Forest Management Buffer Areas" restricts forest management activities from occurring within "Buffer Areas," which is defined as all land 100' from the high water mark of all lakes, ponds, and bogs. The Terms also require forest management activities along streams, rivers or in forested wetlands to meet or exceed currently accepted silvicultural best management practices. Again, these requirements are in addition to the proposed modifications requiring 100' setback requirements for all camps and associated camp structures from any river, pond, lake, or perennial stream or government-regulated wetland.*

Acquiring Additional Forest Preserve Acreage along the River Corridors

9. **Comment:** Heartwood has substantial acreage on or near the St. Regis, Grass, and Oswegatchie Rivers. Additional lands along these rivers should be acquired from Heartwood and added to the Forest Preserve, in order to ensure full protection of the northern flowing rivers in the western Adirondacks and the creation of a large Low-Elevation Boreal Wilderness.
10. **Comment:** Given that the West Branch of the St. Regis is both the least protected and the least publicly accessible, additional lands should be conveyed from Heartwood and added to a broad Forest Preserve river corridor along this stretch, resulting in a greater benefit to the outdoor recreation economy of the area.
11. **Comment:** The proposed permanent leasing of 220 camps on the Easement lands would amount to thousands of dollars in financial gain, yearly, and in perpetuity for the current landowner and any future landowners. This gain deserves an equal gain to The People of The State of New York and can be achieved through an increase in the amount of additional Forest Preserve lands attained in this exchange.
12. **Comment:** It is inappropriate for the proposed action to provide significant private benefits gained by private interests under a public conservation easement. The proposed action provides the largest benefit to camp leaseholders and Heartwood, not the general public or future generations of New York.
13. **Comment:** Maintaining 220 camps on one (1) acre lots on the Easement lands results in a recreational loss of 220 acres, originally acquired by The People of the State of New York. This loss must be equally compensated for.

Combined Response (9 - 13): *In exchange for providing Heartwood the permanent right to lease up to 220 hunting and fishing camps that would otherwise end in 2014, Heartwood will convey certain parcels of their land in fee (all property rights) to The People of the State of New York.*

In order to ensure a fair exchange between The People of the State of New York and Heartwood, DEC's Bureau of Real Property has appraised the current real estate market value of the proposed exchange of real property rights (see section V.C. of the FEIS). For this, two separate appraisals were completed and determined values were updated in 2010. The appraisals estimated the value of Heartwood's camp rights ending in July 2014 under the existing Easements alongside the value of Heartwood's rights if the camps were extended indefinitely under the proposed Easement modifications. The appraisals also estimated the per acre value of potential fee interests on the Marshall Lot with extensive frontage along the Deer River, outside the Blue Line/Adirondack Park, in addition to the per acre value of potential (remaining) fee interest of lands on a portion of the Santa Clara Tract Easement, located within the Blue Line/Adirondack Park.

Based on these appraisals (and the internal appraisal review), it was determined that Heartwood will convey all remaining property rights on 2,146 acres of the Santa Clara Tract to The People of the State of New York. These lands will be added to the Forest Preserve and are located adjacent to the recently classified Deer River Primitive Area, a valuable public recreational and ecological resource within the Forest Preserve. Secondly, Heartwood will convey all fee interests on 562 acres of currently unencumbered private land with 4,800 feet of frontage along the eastern bank of the Deer River just outside the Adirondack Park. This land will become State Forests and will be managed according to DEC sustainable forestry practices and open to the public for outdoor recreational use. Both the appraisal and contract agreement will be reviewed by the Office of the State Comptroller and the State's Attorney General Office, consistent with state law and before the exchange of property rights may take place.

14. **Comment:** The State's 2020 VISION series, in addition to the 1992 State Open Space Conservation Plan identified the St. Regis West Branch as a conservation priority, which should go into a Low-Elevation Boreal Wilderness.

Response: *Acquisition of lands from Heartwood that may fall under one of the priority projects listed in the State's 2009 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan would require further consideration and review by DEC, AG, and Comptroller, in addition to state land acquisition funding approved in the legislative budget: none of which is currently being considered by the State.*

Camps & Camp Leases

15. **Comment:** Since the camps are proposed to remain on the property, APA Section 814 (State Agency Projects) is required for proposed modifications, as it constitutes a new land use project.

Response: *Though the question is outside the scope of the proposed action and outside of DEC's administrative jurisdiction, APA states in its December 21, 2009 letter to DEC, in response to the DEIS:*

"The subdivision and other activities approved as part of APA Project Permit 98-313 were subject to Agency permit jurisdiction as a Class A and B Regional, Wetlands and Rivers Project pursuant to §§810 (1) (d) (1) (b) and (e), 810 (1) (e) (1) (b) and (e), 810 (1) (e) (3) and (9) and 810(2) (c) (16) and (d) (6) of the APA Act, Agency regulations implementing the Freshwater Wetlands Act within the Adirondack Park at 9 NYCRR 578.3(n) (1) and (2) and Agency regulations implementing the NYS Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act at 9 NYCRR 577.5.

Specifically, the subdivisions required Agency approval pursuant to §§810 (1) (e) (3) of the APA Act, 9 NYCRR 578.3 (n) (1) (i) and 9 NYCRR 577.5(b) (x) and (c) (1). The single family dwellings, private hunting and fishing club structures (if post-August 1, 1973 500 or more square feet in size) or group camps required an Agency permit pursuant to §§810 (2) (d) (1) or (4) or 810 (1) (e) (5) of the Act as Class A or B Regional Projects."

16. **Comment:** Violations related to the hunting and recreational camps recognized in the original Easement terms and APA Permit has not been addressed.
17. **Comment:** Anecdotal reports suggest that some lease camps on the Easement lands are now substantially bigger than the 500 square foot and one acre limits. Non-conforming structures and lots need to be corrected or removed.
18. **Comment:** The 1999 APA permit (Project Permit 98-313) for the Champion land deal recognized an enforcement action of nearly 300 possible violations of all APA statutes (minimum setbacks, SFD's, camp permits, rivers projects and wetlands, as well as other statutory and regulatory offenses) and established a \$500,000 bonding mechanism by Champion to correct the issues. The Permit recognized that the bulk of these violations were directly related to the hunting and recreational cabin sites.

Combined Response (16 - 18): *In December 2010, APA and Heartwood completed and signed a "Revised Agreement with Respect to Violations (Enforcement 099-25)" (Appendix F) to address these violations, in addition to APA approving a new "Project Permit 2010-298" (Appendix H) to address future restrictions and compliance on the Heartwood Easements, if the camps were to remain. See section III.A.5. of the FEIS - "Adirondack Park Agency Jurisdiction" and section VIII. - "Mitigation Measures to Avoid or Minimize Potential Adverse Impacts."*

19. **Comment:** Given the history and potential for enforcement problems on the former Champion lands, what estimates will the FEIS provide on true, long-term monitoring costs and dispute resolution challenges to be expected.

Response: Enforcement of the proposed modifications of the Easements will remain a joint effort between DEC and Heartwood. As demonstrated in the FEIS, the beneficial impacts of the proposed action outweigh the potential of any significant adverse environmental impacts, including long-term monitoring costs of Easement violations under the proposed action. Again, the revised modification to allow Heartwood to retain its camp leasing rights remains consistent with similar, large working forest conservation easements under the State's Working Forest Conservation Easement program.

20. **Comment:** Permanent continuation of the 220 lease camps would result in unavoidable impacts to water resources, ecological corridors, soils, wildlife, such as overharvesting of fish and game, and to the aesthetic character of the buffer lands and the adjoining Forest Preserve lands.
21. **Comment:** The FEIS should examine the alternative action of consolidating far fewer camps on the most sustainable sites, away from critical environmental areas important to the protection of Forest Preserve lands on both sides of the South Branch of the Grass River.
22. **Comment:** Proposing a change from a future of no permanent hunting camps to one of advancing and promoting 220 hunting camps and their redevelopment and increased use ought to have a direct effect on the lands viability for wildlife and ecological corridors. The FEIS must assess these impacts under both no camp and camp scenarios by qualified experts.

Combined Response (20 – 22): DEC disagrees. The majority of the 110,000 acres remain active, working forests where land and noise disturbance are a common occurrence, and where the camps are located on a total of 220 acres (two tenths of a percent of the total land acreage), are of a very limited density and are clustered and located along existing logging roads and trails. For these reasons, the FEIS does not find that there would be potentially significant adverse impacts on ecological or wildlife corridors, nor on nearby Forest Preserve lands, that would require further in-depth study and analysis of impacts of these two scenarios (section VII.B.1.a.(3)).

23. **Comment:** In 2000, the State of New York went to court to preserve the Champion deal and won under Attorney General Spitzer. How can DEC now deem that the proposed modifications are equal to "our most careful stewardship," to "protect this precious resource," over the long-term?

Response: The premise of the 2000 court case was whether the State has the right to purchase the land and the conservation easements without local government approval. Again, two separate real estate transactions occurred under the "Champion deal": i) the purchase of full fee title of 29,000 acres of Champion timber properties along the river corridors and Madawaska Bog, under the "Northern Flow Rivers" OSCP priority project for these special protections; and ii) the purchase of 110,000 acres of certain commercial development rights and public recreational rights under the "Working Forest Conservation Easements" OSCP priority project with its principal purpose of helping to sustain New York's long-standing, private working forests.

24. **Comment:** The DEIS references a "Camp Access Map" on page 15, but a map was not attached to help in understanding this section.

Response: A camp access map is a provision of the proposed modifications, which requires Heartwood to prepare this map before camp access is implemented. It is not required by Heartwood at this time, in order to modify the Easements. However, if the agreement is accepted by both DEC and Heartwood, Heartwood will then be responsible for meeting this provision. Clarification is provided in the FEIS to address this question, along with correcting the capitalization of the map's name (section VIII.A.2.).

25. **Comment:** Why would DEC or Heartwood agree to only continue leasing to camp lessees when much of the business for the Landowner is from private clubs who don't own a camp? Many of these clubs have older, local members who hunt and need to have motor vehicle access on these lands.

Response: Under the original terms of the Easements and the proposed modifications, members of private clubs, currently leasing portions of the Easement lands, will be able to hunt and use these lands without a fee as a member of the public. The modification to sell back the private camp leasing rights to Heartwood would allow them to retain some of the economic benefits of camp leasing (a benefit that has been reserved by private landowners with similar State working forest conservation easements prior to and since this time), because it is viewed as perpetuating the long-term use of the lands as private working forests (Easements' principal objective), while at the same time, upholding the value of the recreational rights acquired by The People of the State in 1999.

26. **Comment:** If a hunting club is leasing a camp that is on other Heartwood property, but is not on the Easement lands, will these clubs continue to have access to gated roads on the Easement lands after 2014, once it is open to the public?

Response: If the proposed modifications are approved, only lessees with a camp on the Easement lands will be allowed access on designated ingress and egress routes to their camps, which will be agreed upon by Heartwood and DEC. All other access on the Easement lands will be subject to the public recreational rights acquired by The People of the State of New York in 1999. Also, as stated in an earlier response, if and when the proposed action is completed, DEC will provide a public information meeting to address any additional questions on the new camp lease restrictions.

27. **Comment:** Monitoring and enforcement on working forest conservation easements in the Adirondack Park have been sporadic and incomplete. DEC must establish a rigorous monitoring and enforcement system for all their Easement lands, especially the Heartwood Easement lands, if the proposed modifications are to be approved.

Response: The Department's Bureau of Real Property has comprehensively inventoried all building footprints on the Easement lands for future monitoring compliance and describes its monitoring efforts in section VIII.C, "DEC Monitoring & Enforcement" of the FEIS.

Motor Vehicle & ATV Use

28. **Comment:** If a club is leasing a camp, will each club member be given a guest pass for motor vehicle use, which also restricts ATV use? How many passes will be given out to a camp lessee?

Response: The proposed modifications require Heartwood to provide and require each camp lessee to display a sticker or other visible notification that clearly identifies motor vehicles as belonging to a camp lessee and to assure that any guests of camp lessees possess a pass that allows access by passenger vehicle only (section VIII.A.2.a.). These new camp lease conditions will be the responsibility of Heartwood's land manger to administer.

29. **Comment:** The Easements and APA Permit 98-313 refer often to a "Land Management Plan" that was being drafted for the protected property. Much of the data related to the roads and what would be publicly available for motor vehicle access is described in that plan. Is a copy of that plan available with maps?

Response: Section VIII.D. of the FEIS discusses the reference to a "Land Management Plan," which is now commonly referred to as a "Recreation Management Plan (RMP)." A Recreation Management Plan is required to be developed for each of the three tracts. Interim RMPs were developed in 2000 to initially address recreation and land management of each tract. The Tooley Pond and Croghan Tract Interim RMPs will be amended to address public recreation in relation to adjoining Forest Preserve and other conservation easement lands because much of the administrative management of these lands and public recreational use frequently overlaps. Upon development of final Recreation Management

Plans for these three tracts, maps will be developed to show the roads open to public motor vehicle access and the other public recreational facilities provided on each tract. These maps are also commonly provided on a kiosk at the entrance points of each tract.

- 30. Comment:** I am an ADK 46er, but I cannot do what I used to do. As many of our members are aging, it is going to be difficult to hunt most of the land we now lease without motor vehicle access. Hopefully, things may change in the future as this is happening too much all over the Adirondacks.

Response: *The Easement lands, like most of the State's working forest conservation easements, have well-maintained logging roads, which are open to public motor vehicle use by truck or car. Motor vehicle access on these lands is not frequently a problem.*

- 31. Comment:** Not all clubs use ATVs or have the intention to use them and some camp lessees support the ban on ATVs, in exchange for keeping camps on the Easements.

- 32. Comment:** Camp lessees should be permitted to use ATVs when involved in DEC licensed sportsmen activities, such as hunting, fishing and trapping.

- 33. Comment:** Camp owners and any person listed as using such camps should be allowed the use of ATVs. If any person abuses that privilege, then only that person should lose their privilege.

- 34. Comment:** Camp lessees should be given guidelines and enforcement warnings for any ATV use violations.

- 35. Comment:** Regarding ATV use on the Easement lands, we should continue to educate people on being self-policing and continue to allow the clubs to manage sensible and low-impact use.

Combined Response (31 - 35): *As stated above, DEC and Heartwood are legally bound to uphold the objectives and conditions of the Easements and the proposed modifications, if approved. Education, monitoring and enforcement of motor vehicle and ATV use on the Easement lands will occur through various measures, which over time may become necessary. Public motor vehicle use of many of the roads is allowed.*

- 36. Comment:** The FEIS should specifically examine the potential use and misuse of motorized activities by camp lessees on adjoining Forest Preserve lands and on the significant narrow river corridors, in comparison to removing the 220 lease camps, which would eliminate this potential misuse and any of its subsequent adverse impacts.

Response: *The potential significant adverse environmental impacts from the use and potential misuse of motorized vehicles by camp lessees on adjoining Forest Preserve lands has been reviewed in Section VII.B.2.b. of the FEIS. As concluded, many of the potential adverse environmental impacts of the proposed action are not determined to be significant, where as the overall beneficial impacts of allowing the camps to remain outweigh the perceived impacts of removing the camps. Again, since the Easements are a legal contract between Heartwood and The People of the State of New York, acting through DEC, both parties are provided the right and responsibility to enforce the agreed upon terms, and where any failure of either party to uphold the terms, may be upheld in a court of law.*

- 37. Comment:** After all the debate on reserving certain motor vehicle rights for the camp lessees, I am surprised to hear that the Landowner has motor vehicle rights in perpetuity.

Response: *The FEIS addresses this clarification which involves the modification to revise a footnote that defines "forest management activities," a term that is used throughout the Easements to reference a reserved right of the Landowner. As explained in sections V.A.3. and VII.A.3., the definition currently reserves to the Landowner, its successors, lessees, invitees, contractors, agents and assigns, the right of*

forest related recreational activities, which right includes motorized activities. This opening was later recognized and as such, the revised modification was added to ensure that this right shall extend to the Landowner and its successors only.

- 38. Comment:** Any modification of the original Easements, allowing retention of the lease camps should place the responsibility on Heartwood to police their lands and camp lessees, in order to prevent ATV trespass on the Forest Preserve.

Response: *Both DEC and Heartwood will work to monitor and enforce any illegal ATV trespass on Forest Preserve lands. It will remain a joint effort, as both the general public and camp lessees will be on the properties, and where illegal ATV trespass within the Forest Preserve occurs with or without camp lessees on nearby or adjacent easement properties.*

Public Access & Recreation

- 39. Comment:** When will the former Champion Easement lands be open to public access? I fished the St. Regis River most of my life, and now, at my age, I cannot access this river for fishing. There is no handicap access or even a way for older people to use this area.

Response: *The Easement lands are open to public access and use, except during September 1 - December 31, as provided in the original Easement terms. Through the Recreation (or Unit) Management Planning process, DEC will continue to address public requests for certain recreational access and facilities, in order to provide such facilities, based on yearly budget and staff resources. Current access to the St. Regis River is on State Forest Preserve land. See DEC's public website for accessible fishing access sites - <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/34038.html>.*

- 40. Comment:** It has been 10 years and public access is still not provided on the Easement lands. DEC should be obligated to provide The People of the State of New York an estimated timeframe for when public recreation access will be made available?

Response: *Public access is currently provided on the Easement Tracts, consistent with each Tract's Interim Recreation Management Plan (section VIII.D.1. of the FEIS and Appendices M – Q). For further information on the current recreational access and facilities provided on each easement, the public may contact DEC's Supervising Foresters in its Raybrook office (518) 987-1291 for Santa Clara Tract; Potsdam office (315) 265-3090 for Tooley Pond Tract; or Lowville office (315) 376-3521 for Croghan Tract.*

- 41. Comment:** The public should be allowed to use the Easement lands under the same rules as the camp lessees, outside the exclusive use of the camps and camp envelopes.

Response: *The proposed modifications provide camp lessees and the general public with the same allowed recreational use and access of the Easement lands, with exception of the camps and one (1) acre camp envelopes. Sportsman and women within the general public who are interested in extended, overnight hunting and fishing on the Easement lands, may also camp at designated public locations or have an opportunity to lease one of the twelve designated recreation camp sites.*

- 42. Comment:** If motorized use is banned, there will be several remote areas of the Easement lands that will be virtually inaccessible for hunting. Further, there are several club members in their 60's and 70's that cannot hunt this land without the use of an ATV and who will likely not qualify for a handicapped hunting permit.

- 43. Comment:** If the camps remain, the Landowner will most likely allow its camp lessees to continue to access certain gated roads with motor vehicles that will otherwise not be accessible by the general

public. What is the benefit to the public, consumers and the local economy, if this is to be the case? Equal vehicular access should be available to anyone who wants it or to no one at all.

Combined Response (42 - 43): *As Heartwood and DEC have agreed to certain objectives, reserved rights, terms and conditions provided in the Easements, both parties are responsible for ensuring that camp lessee and public use upholds these legal obligations. As additional funds and staff resources become available, DEC will continue to work towards providing more public access and recreational opportunities that remain consistent with the Easements.*

- 44. Comment:** The use of ATVs and snowmobiles is currently a major recreational activity of camp lessees. If motorized access is open to the public, camp lessees may abuse the designated use of open roads to the public for motor vehicle use, resulting in increased use of motor vehicles on the Easement lands.

Response: *If the proposed action is approved and the camps remain, the opening of roads on the Easement lands to public motor vehicle use and the potential misuse of motor vehicles by camp lessees will be evaluated through DEC's Recreation Management Planning process. In addition, if any misuse of motorized vehicles becomes apparent on the Easement lands or adjoining Forest Preserve lands, DEC, as the public recreation land manager, is responsible for revising the public recreational use in order to uphold the objectives and terms of the Easements (section VIII.D).*

- 45. Comment:** It should be noted that without hunters on ATV's to carry tools to clear trails, even activities on foot will become more difficult. Without some sort of motor vehicle (ATV or Truck) access to remote areas of the tract, this Easement for public access will get limited use, except for areas close to the few public roads in the area. All existing roads that are presently used and maintained by hunters should remain opened to them, at least during hunting season. If not, the public will not have reasonable access to a large part of the Easement lands.

Response: *DEC appreciates and acknowledges the significant stewardship contribution camp lessees and club members provide on the Easement lands, which is recognized in the FEIS as being one of the beneficial impacts of retaining the camp leases. DEC also recognizes the older demographic of its state residents who make up a large portion of its Big Game Hunting Program and licensing sales, and will therefore continue to work towards balancing necessary motor vehicle access on the Tracts with the conservation objectives of the Easements.*

- 46. Comment:** Roads should not be opened to the public for general ATV use on the Easement lands.

Response: *Though this comment is outside the proposed action of amending the Easements to allow Heartwood to retain their camp leasing right, section VIII.D. of the FEIS, addresses the concern of public ATV use on the Easement lands. Planning of public motorized recreational use on the Easement lands will occur through DEC's Recreation Management Planning process, which is subject to SEQR and will be provided to APA for their review and input.*

- 47. Comment:** Request any designated motor vehicle access corridors through the Easement lands to provide for connections to other motor vehicle access corridors on the Grasse River and Long Pond Working Forest Easements, in order to establish a cross-country trail system.

- 48. Comment:** Request recreation management plans for the Tooley Pond Tract Easement and the Long Pond Easement are developed in coordination with each other in order to develop the future potential of connecting motor vehicle use corridors.

- 49. Comment:** On the Tooley Pond Easement Tract, public and camp lessee access is requested on Tooley Pond Road to reach the adjacent Long Pond Easement, and on Spruce Mountain Rd.

Combined Response (47 - 50): Public recreation planning for the Tooley Pond, Croghan and Santa Clara Easement Tracts will be addressed through the DEC public Recreation Management Planning process, which will invite public review and comments in order to provide appropriate public recreational access and use of each Tract (Section VIII.D.).

Sustainable Forestry Operations

- 50. Comment:** The proposed amendment should specifically call for the use of the independent Forest Sustainability Council (FSC) program, in order to maintain the highest standards possible for meeting the State's intent for optimum conservation of these critical lands, forests and waters.

Response: The proposed modifications list several provisions that must be met by an independent Forest Certification Program, which program is approved by DEC and reviewed every five (5) years to ensure the program remains effective in reviewing the Landowner's forestry operations and its signed agreement of the sustainable forestry terms of the Easements. This modification brings the Heartwood Easements up-to-date with a majority of the State's working forest conservation easements managed by DEC, since this time. See Appendix I, Modification Ten, for the specific terms.

Support for Proposed Action

The following are comments received by DEC in support of the proposed action.

Local Support

- 51. Town of Croghan:** The Town of Croghan is in favor of the proposed action. In general, the Board of Trustees of the Town of Croghan is in favor of actions that enable the public to enjoy our natural resources.
- 52. Town of Waverly:** Regarding public comments for the Santa Clara Tract Easement proposal to have 220 camps remain, the Town of Waverly views this proposal quite favorably. One of the most positive factors involved here is the loss of revenue which would be realized if these camps had to be removed. Also, with respect to the 1998 Champion land sale, our town has never regained the tourists that were lost because of this sale. This proposal insures that additional losses will not be incurred. This subject matter was discussed quite extensively at our regular town board meeting on 12/21/09. Finally, our voices of discontent seem to have fallen on receptive ears. This proposal has been a sore subject for many years in our community. We felt that it was wrong to remove the camps that were in the river corridor. However, if the remaining camps on the easement lands were to remain, it would be a plus to our community. Please understand our situation. We struggle financially to survive as a town. Every little financial reduction in revenues hurt our area.
- 53. St. Lawrence Co. Sportsmen's Federation:** The St. Lawrence County Sportsmen's Federation (Black Lake Fish & Game Association, Bruner Hill Club Inc., Canton Sportsmen's Club, Chippewa Bay Fish & Game Club, Clear Pond Club, Hill 19 Club, Lisbon Sportsmen Club, Massena Rod & Gun Club, Norfolk Rod & Gun Club, Palmer Sportsmen's Club, Parishville Sportsmen's Club, Ponderosa Club, Lawrence Co. Trappers Association, Thirty Five Mile Club, Lawrence Valley Sportsmen's Club, Stillwater Club of Canton, St. Lawrence Co. Fisheries Advisory Board, Boosters Rod & Gun Club, Catamount 8 Hunting Club, Diamond Sportsmen Club) supports allowing camps to remain on Heartwood Forest lands.
- 54. Conservation Alliance of NY:** Conservation Alliance of New York (CANY) supports allowing camps to remain on Heartwood Forestland Fund III conservation easements. Camps should have controlled guidelines on their ATV usage.

Economic Benefits from Camp Lessees

55. **Comment:** This compromise will provide landowners a revenue stream while continuing to offer the economic benefits these camps provide to North Country businesses. The conversion and addition to the public lands while granting access all year around makes this a win-win. Please be sure this amendment passes.
56. **Comment:** I am writing in support of the camps being allowed to remain on Heartwood Forestland Fund III conservation easements. Sportsmen and women have been conservators of this land for nearly a hundred years with no discernable negative environmental impact. Sportsmen and women involved in sporting activities have contributed millions of dollars to the local economy during this period of time and are a business mainstay in many of these areas. Please develop a sensible plan that allows the sportsmen and women to continue contributing to the local economy and that sustains one of the Adirondacks longest standing traditions. The following link reflects the import contributions sportsmen and women make to the local economy - <http://www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/fhw06-ny.pdf>.
57. **Comment:** While I am not a resident of New York, I am a consumer of goods and services that support the local economies of New York State having spent approximately \$3,000 for lodging, meals and guide services in 2009 alone. This does not include expenditures for gas, tolls, sporting licenses and related incidental purchases made along the way. It should also be noted that this commerce occurs in parts of the State that need it most. When I come to your state to hunt and fish (and spend money), I am looking for a high quality experience. Posting and development has made a serious negative impact on the opportunity to enjoy the quality I seek. With this in mind, I ask, what is the real public benefit of allowing these hunting clubs to exist if they continue to have virtually exclusive access to the land on which they are located? These clubs effectively have exclusive (gated), convenient access to large, uncrowded tracts that others don't get to use without a great deal of effort. New York has done an admirable job in acquiring conservation rights but if the land is inaccessible, what is the benefit to the public, consumers and the local economy? Your plan does nothing to address this issue. The few hunting clubs on these properties will continue to have vehicular access to these areas while the majority has to work much harder to enjoy to benefits of these easements. I know the hunting clubs are excellent stewards of the land and don't begrudge them their cabins but equal vehicular access should be available to anyone who wants it or to no one at all. Thanks for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.
58. **Comment:** As a lifelong outdoorsman and a member of Stony Brook Club in St. Lawrence County since 1968, I commend the DEC for working with Heartwood Forestland Fund III and other stakeholders in working out an arrangement whereby the existing 220 hunting camp sites can lease a one acre parcel on an annual basis after the 2014 previously stated end date as stipulated in the original land sale agreement. I have for many years enjoyed the time that I have spent in the Adirondacks on Stony Brook. During this time we, as leases have had a positive working relationship with the owners. As visitors to the Adirondacks, we not only enjoy the wilderness experience, we also support local businesses when we purchase supplies, go out for dinner and fuel our vehicles. The local economies depend upon this business in order to stay open. From the time that the leaves fall, until the snow flies there are the hunters who come to the region. On our most recent visit from November 3-17, we made a trip into town and spent \$76 for supplies and then we went out to dinner at the Deer Valley Lodge and spent another \$65 on dinner and an additional \$60 playing quick picks while we dined. This \$201 was spent by 3 hunters. How many times is this scenario repeated over the hunting season? I would guess many, many times. Without these visitors, the money discussed previously would not be spent. Say nothing about two people in our camp who reside outside NYS and their purchasing out of state licenses @\$140each. These licenses would not have been sold. I used to Jive in NYS and before I moved to Vermont and purchased a lifetime license for \$700 and now receive my license by mail each year. In short, this decision to amend the previous agreement will have an economic impact on the region and

NYS DEC as a statement will be made that says that you, the hunters, are welcome and we want you to return each year and we value your presence.

59. **Comment:** Some clubs have members from out-of-state who purchase expensive non-resident hunting licenses every year. If they did not have a lease camp to come to, this would all go by the wayside.

Older Age Demographic of Camp Lessees

60. **Comment:** The average age of the members of these clubs has increased dramatically over the years and without a camp to go to every fall it's not too far reaching to assume that many of these older hunters would simply stop hunting, as the camp life is as important to them as harvesting the game that they pursue.

Stewardship Benefits from Camp Lessees

61. **Comment:** During the course of the year, our hunt club takes the time to clean up litter along the access roads, repair washouts and high erosion areas as needed, and have cleared windfall from the access roads - particularly following the 2008 windstorms. And we have always helped the lost hunter, hiker or fisherman along the way. We have been cooperators in the DEC's Ruffed Grouse Hunting Log Survey and have provided the DEC with data we collected over the past 30 years on deer population seen and harvested.
62. **Comment:** To assist with stewardship on the Easement lands, DEC and the Landowner should send out voluntary questionnaires to all camp lessees and club members to get their feedback on concerns they see on the Easement land; and send out a newsletter making these concerns part of it. Examples of information gathered could range from tree health, wildlife spotting, and other changes or discoveries on the lands.
63. **Comment:** I want to thank the DEC and Forestland Group/Heartwood for their cooperation in potentially saving our camp, we feel that the clubs are excellent stewards of the land and we are looking forward to the hopeful approval of the easement modifications. I hope you understand how much your efforts are truly appreciated.
64. **Comment:** Sportsmen and women have been conservators of the Easement lands for nearly a hundred years and have been stewards for conservation. Sportsmen and women involved in outdoor activities have contributed millions of dollars to the local economy during this period of time and are a business mainstay in many of these areas. We would like to see a plan developed that allows the continued usage of the camps and keeps sportsmen and women contributing to the local economy and enjoying the outdoors as our forefathers have. These camps are not only for hunting, fishing and trapping but are an integral part of many families time spent together enjoying the outdoors.
65. **Comment:** I'm a member of the Long As We Live Hunt Club. It should be noted that the members of our club do add value to the Adirondacks. We help maintain the access roads by cleaning road debris and repairing washouts. We clean up litter left by others and always leave the forest better than how we found it. We also support the local communities by purchasing food, supplies and materials from local merchants. I appreciated the efforts that the DEC and the Forestland Group have put into this proposal to save the camps that have occupied this land for so long. I know this process has been a long one and I surely hope we will be successful. Thank you.
66. **Comment:** Aside from hunting camps, as the Associate Director of the Outdoor Program at St. Lawrence University, I'm very excited for the proposed addition of public lands. Currently, much of our outdoor leadership and environmental education takes place on public lands. The SLUOP uses the

various Grasse River corridor State holdings for whitewater canoe and kayak instruction. I am excited for the possibilities the addition of this vast wilderness will open up for our students in orienteering, backcountry hunting and travel, cross-country skiing, etc.

67. **Comment:** The State will be able to add a 2,146 acre parcel within the Adirondack Park which will be added to the Forest Preserve adjacent to the Deer River Primitive Area. The camps will be allowed 10 remain which will add to the economy of the entire region. Owners of these camps will pay taxes, buy food, gas, propane and various other supplies, thus contributing to the economy of the region. I would hope the State of New York would be in favor of this proposal. We feel that the clubs are excellent stewards of the land and we are looking forward to the hopeful approval of the easement modifications. I hope you understand how much your efforts are truly appreciated.
68. **Comment:** Regarding the ATV issue that affects other clubs, I would like to state that our club does not use ATVs. We really never have needed them, nor do we ever intend to use them. I can see the other clubs' feeling of necessity for ATV's. However, we're cognizant of their potential misuse and prefer to walk where we need to go.
69. **Comment:** We should continue to educate people on being self-policing and continue to allow the clubs to manage sensible and low impact use on the leased property.

Social & Cultural Tradition of Camps

70. **Comment:** Our camp has been in existence in one form or another for over 100 years and we have survived despite the loss of the first camp to fire in the 1940s and the second camp to snow collapse in the 1970s. None of those events compared with the potential loss of the camp itself when the Champion sale occurred in 1999.
71. **Comment:** Nearly all of our members are 2nd, 3rd, or 4th generation club members who are of modest means, and simply aren't exactly young enough to complete a hike in-trip; or are too poor to stay at a lodge. Although the main use of the club is for hunting, the true use is for all of us to get together and spend time with family and friends for a week out of the year, no matter where our careers take us.
72. **Comment:** I live and work in the sparsely populated North Country, yet love to get to the woods to enjoy even more solitude. We currently lease 4,000 acres in the easement area and there are only two 1-acre envelopes in this area. This density does not have a significant impact on the acreage for a wilderness use perspective and I am in strong support of approving the proposed amendment. With a 4 year old daughter now expressing an interest in 'going to camp,' it is becoming an even more valuable experience for me.
73. **Comment:** I would like to show my support for the Envelope Easement on the Santa Clara track. My father and brothers have belonged to a hunt club on the Easement lands for 30 plus years. Now, I have children that think the camp is the best place on earth. Please allow us to keep a family tradition going, and introducing other kids to the great outdoors.
74. **Comment:** The camp I own has been in the family since the late 30's. My first trip was when I was 12 and it was very exciting as we packed everything for miles. Now, with the logging roads, I can drive within a mile of camp. I recently had a hip replaced and now at 63 years old, this is very important to be able to continue enjoying the camp.
75. **Comment:** I am an Adirondack buff. I am a mountain climbing summer and winter 46er. I'm as much as a lover of the mountains and environment as anyone, but I'm also a 62 year old retired engineer who also loves hunting, fishing and most important, the wise and multiple-use of our lands.

- 76. Comment:** As a native of Canton and a person who still spends one month each year in St. Lawrence County, I would like to voice my support for this amendment. These hunting camps are an essential part of the cultural fabric of the North Country and provide an important source of low-cost recreation in an area that has been and continues to be economically depressed. These camps in question are generally simple structures that allow North Country residents a chance to spend time in the 'Great South Woods.' Few people in St. Lawrence, Franklin, and Herkimer can afford to purchase land and build a cabin, let alone a second home or waterfront property, which are increasingly purchased by folks from downstate or out-of-state. As such these leased hunting camps offer local people an inexpensive way to enjoy the Adirondacks and other lands managed by the DEC. It is short, it would be a shame if North Country residents could no longer "head up to camp" for a weekend. Lastly, there is precedent at the federal level for such lease programs, including those on United States Forest Service Land here in the intermountain West; additionally, there are privately-owned in-holdings in National Parks and Monuments around the country (e.g., Dinosaur National Monument) that continue to be important parts of the cultural landscape, surely as important an element in people's lives as the natural landscape.
- 77. Comment:** As a long time member of the Furnace Mt. Club and the current secretary/treasurer of the Owl Mt. Club, both of which are on property leased from The Heartwood Forestland Fund, as well as being the current vice-president of The Adirondack Federation of Sports Clubs Inc. and speaking on behalf of myself and the many members of these organizations, I would like to offer our support in favor of the proposed modification to the original easement agreement which would allow the long-standing tradition of the camps to continue.
- 78. Comment:** Hunters are conservationists and by allowing the long-standing tradition of the camps to continue it will give us a resource to help recruit new young hunters and teach them ethical and proper methods for carrying on this important tradition. Some of these camps have been in existence long enough to see four generations sleep in their bunks. In today's techno infused society, it is getting more and more difficult to entice our young people to become a part of the hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation environment. Without the camps, it will become even more difficult.
- 79. Comment:** I am the current President of a small recreation club that has leased land through LandVest for several years on the former Champion leased lands. We have a small very rustic camp in the Tooley Pond Tract. Our members hike or ski or ride horses far back on the railroad bed to enjoy the wilderness. Three members hunt, but we are not a "hunting club." We are much more likely to be canoeing in the area or looking for wildflowers or just enjoying the serene woodland setting. We use our candle lit 12'x28' camp in every month of the year, including fly season. We have no problems with restrictions on four wheelers. Although none of us have ever used a snowmobile to access our camp, the snowmobile riders we have encountered while skiing have been most respectful. The one acre envelope idea is supported by all our members because it would allow us to continue using the area and our camp and would not impede the general public's use in fact it would encourage use. If ever you or anyone working on this issue would like to hike, ski, snowshoe or ride an old horse the two miles back to the Five Lame Cats Club camp, please contact me. One of our members would be pleased to escort you. Thank you for your work on this issue.
- 80. Comment:** I am the owner of a second generation hunting camp in the Stony Brook Club. I am also currently on the board of directors of this club. My family has been enjoying this property for over 60 years. It is a huge part of our heritage and it was heartbreaking to think that we were potentially going to lose it. We have an extreme love and respect for what we have there and have done our best to be the stewards of this land for many years. It would be a shame if I am unable to pass this heritage on to my potential grandchildren.

- 81. Comment:** Although the main use of our club is for hunting, the true use is for all of us to get together and spend time with family and friends for a week out of the year, no matter where our careers take us. Very few deer exist up there, although that never dampens our excitement in heading north each November.
- 82. Comment:** As a camp owner I am very excited about the proposed action to allow us to lease these camps with access. The camp I own has been in the family since the late 30s. My first trip when I was about 12 was very exciting as we packed everything for miles. Now, with the logging roads I can drive within a mile of camp, I recently had a hip replaced and now 63 years old this is very important to be able to continue enjoying the camp. I believe this proposal is great and it is my belief that everyone who owns a camp feels the same and will respect the APA and DEC regarding rules and regulations. I have been a member of Alexander McDonald and East Brook dub for many years and know and understand the importance of preserving our heritage. I am also an original member that helped establish the Alexander McDonald Fish & Game Club and Saints Snowmobile Club, now the Saint Regis Falls Sportsman Club.
- 83. Comment:** As one who grew up enjoying a family hunting camp on leased paper company land, I urge you to support the revised conservation easement on the former Champion lands, now Heartwood forestland Fund III. This would allow future generations to continue one of the finest Adirondack traditions. The camp owners have always had a good working relationship with the landowners. This is mutually beneficial for both. And the public would benefit from greater access to some very nice land. Thank you for your consideration.
- 84. Comment:** I'm a member of the Long As We Live Hunt Club which is embedded in the Santa Clara Tract. I wish to go on record as one who supports the Easement Amendment/Modifications of the lands owned by Heartwood Forestland Fund III. Our Club has been in existence for over 100 years and I hope it will be around for another 100 years. I have been a member for nearly 40 years and I have two brothers and a son who are also members. Although we will miss the exclusivity of a defined boundary, the loss of the club would be devastating. Considering the several generations of fathers and sons that have hunted these same mountains, the family traditions that have been established, and the unique relationships that have developed, a duplication of these events would be unachievable anywhere else.
- 85. Comment:** As many of our members are aging, it is going to be difficult to hunt most of the land we now lease without motor vehicle access. Hopefully, things may change in the future, as this is happening too much all over the Adirondack. I am and ADK 46er, but I cannot do what I used to do.
- 86. Comment:** I support the Modification of Working Forest Conservation Easements Held by NYSDEC on Lands Owned by Heartwood Forestland Fund III, LP. This amendment will allow the continuation of the long-standing cultural and social tradition of hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation camps in the northwestern Adirondacks. It will also allow for a continued, and important, positive economic impact to the region.
- 87. Comment:** I would like to send my comments and thanks to all that were involved in the amendment mentioned above. I have had a camp on this leased property since 1982 and been actively involved in hunting and fishing activities to preserve and respect the land. The ability to lease the 1 acre plots that the camps are located on will allow this use and respect for the land to continue for family recreation.
- 88. Comment:** Please support the lease programs for existing camps. I have been a member of a camp and club since 1961 and my wife, daughter, son and grandchildren have all experienced the joys and pleasures of the Adirondacks on these lands. The population density of these camps is not great, as we

have a single envelope on 4,000 acres that would remain with the passage of this amendment. Please pass this amendment.

- 89. Comment:** I am writing to ask you to support maintaining recreational/hunting camps in a forest area of 110,000 acres in Franklin, Herkimer, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties. As a long-term resident of the North Country, I have seen firsthand what a splendid resource this program provides. Continuing it, particularly in combination with the proposed accession of additional Heartwood acreage into public use, strikes me as wisdom of the highest order. Please help this wonderful vision come to fruition.
- 90. Comment:** I support the proposed draft environmental statement for the modification of the easement on the Heartwood Forestland Fund lands. These lands have traditionally been used as outdoor recreation areas for area hunting clubs which involved thousands of individuals. To lose these opportunities with the destruction of the camps under the former agreement would degrade quality of life for these people. This was the proper course to keep the lands under productive forest management, but allow the camps to stay. The public can still use the lands, but if the camps offend them, they have 3 million acres of Forest Preserve land to recreate on without any development or motorized use. I do have reservations on the ban of use of ATVs on the property and would be the only thing I would desired changed in the Modification.
- 91. Comment:** I write this in support of the concept of Heartwood. This is a good, but unfortunately, uncommon example of the State considering the general welfare of all citizens, while not ignoring the rights of individual citizens. I believe everyone comes out a victor in this situation, where public access is merged with private ownership rights.
- 92. Comment:** I'm in support of modifying the agreement to allow camps to remain. My relatives and I have been members of the East Brook club since the 1960's, which leases 5,000 acres from Heartland. We would like to pass on to our children and grandchildren the traditions associated with the "Adirondack Deer camp experience," which this modification would allow us to do.
- 93. Comment:** My brother is in support of this plan, as he is not getting any younger and he does not want to learn a new hunting area. We both would like to keep hunting together as we have for the last 35 years.
- 94. Comment:** I have worked with the outdoor community for many years and especially since 1999 in regards to the Champion International Corporations Land Sale. I recently received word that the State, DEC and Community Stakeholders have reached an agreement to allow hunting camps to remain beyond 2014 on the Heartwood Forestland Fund III easement lands. I applaud you and your staff for working to adjust the original easement and finally correct a long overdue mistake. Anyone can make a mistake. It's a fair and good government that corrects them. In closing thank you for your effort and I fully support the revised conservation easement allowing the 220 hunting camps to remain on leases on the 110,000 acres of former Champion International lands.