



New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Lands & Forests
Region 5

Jessup River Wild Forest

Unit Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement

Towns of Arietta, Indian Lake, Lake Pleasant and Wells in Hamilton County

August 2006

GEORGE E. PATAKI, Governor

DENISE M. SHEEHAN, Commissioner

Lead Agency: (in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency)
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-4254

For further information contact:

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
P.O. Box 1316
Northville, NY 12134
phone: (518) 863-4545
fax: (518) 863-2546
e-mail: r5ump@gw.dec.state.ny.us

FEIS Accepted on August 28, 2006

"In every view that is to refresh the memory, there must remain one chief delight. And from Snowy it is not the tumble of green rollers, not even the timber blanket that I would climb to see most of all. There is a little ledge on the western side from which the slope swoops down into a perfect amphitheater. The soaring sides sing evenly to rest. From the ledge the arms of mountains appear to enclose it. ...Long did we lie on the moss of the ledge, steeping in the sunshine, and the calm of the marvelous bowl below. It was a vision of serenity worth far greater struggle to attain. We forgot for a moment that we were on a planet that was mad."

T. Morris Longstreth, adventurer and author

"Those areas classified as wild forest are generally less fragile, ecologically, than the wilderness and primitive areas. Because the resources of these areas can withstand more human impact, these areas should accommodate much of the future use of the Adirondack forest preserve. The scenic attributes and the variety of uses to which these areas lend themselves provide a challenge to the recreation planner. Within constitutional constraints, those types of outdoor recreation that afford enjoyment without destroying the wild forest character or natural resource quality should be encouraged. Many of these areas are under-utilized. For example the crescent of wild forest areas from Lewis County south and east through Old Forge, southern Hamilton and northern Fulton Counties and north and east to the Lake George vicinity can and should afford extensive outdoor recreation readily accessible from the primary east-west transportation and population axis of New York State."

Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, November 1987, Updated 2001

Clearly, a delicate balancing act is called for, and yet just as clearly, the Department's management focus must remain on protecting the natural resources. "[F]uture use" is not quantified in the above statement, but it is generally quantified and characterized in the definition of Wild Forest as only "a somewhat higher degree of human use" when compared to Wilderness. And whereas certain "types of outdoor recreation... should be encouraged," they must fall "[w]ithin constitutional constraints... without destroying the wild forest character or natural resource quality" of the area.

A central objective of this plan is to lay out a strategy for achieving such a balance in the JRWF.



ELIOT SPITZER
GOVERNOR

ALEXANDER B. GRANNIS
COMMISSIONER

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

MEMORANDUM

JUL 26 2007

TO: The Record

FROM: Commissioner Alexander B. Grannis **ABG**

SUBJECT: Rescission of Portions of the 2006 Jessup River UMP/FEIS

As explained below, I hereby rescind those portions of the 2006 Jessup River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Jessup River UMP/FEIS) and those portions of the accompanying SEQRA Findings (attached) related to the use of snowmobiles, including but not limited to the construction, modification or relocation of snowmobile trails, bridges and other facilities, and the use of motorized tracked grooming machines (other than snowmobiles) on snowmobile trails.

My rescission is being executed in accordance with the Honorable John C. Egan's Stipulation and Order in the matter of *Adirondack Mountain Club, et al. v. APA, DEC and OPRHP* dated June 27, 2007, wherein the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation was directed to rescind those portions of the Jessup River UMP/FEIS and accompanying SEQRA Findings as noted above within 30 days of the effective date of the Stipulation. All the parties in this matter agreed that the Jessup River UMP/FEIS is being rescinded pending APA conformance determinations with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, after which the Jessup River UMP/FEIS will be amended and reissued to reflect the determinations(s) in accordance with applicable law, including SEQRA.

The remainder of the 2006 Jessup River UMP/FEIS is not affected by this revised approval.

Attachments

This Page Intentionally Left Blank



GEORGE E. PATAKI
GOVERNOR

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

DENISE M. SHEEHAN
COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

AUG 28 2006

TO: The Record

FROM: Denise M. Sheehan *AMS*

SUBJECT: Jessup River Wild Forest Final Unit Management Plan/FEIS

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

This Page Intentionally Left Blank



**RESOLUTION AND SEQRA FINDINGS
ADOPTED BY THE ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY
WITH RESPECT TO
JESSUP RIVER WILD FOREST
UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN
July 14 2006**

WHEREAS, section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act directs the Department of Environmental Conservation to develop, in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency, individual management plans for units of land classified in the Master Plan for Management of State Lands and requires such management plans to conform to the general guidelines and criteria of the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, in addition to such guidelines and criteria, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan prescribes the contents of unit management plans and provides that the Adirondack Park Agency will determine whether a proposed individual unit management plan complies with such general guidelines and criteria; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Environmental Conservation has prepared a unit management plan for the Jessup River Wild Forest; and

WHEREAS, this action is a Type I action pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617 for which the Department of Environmental Conservation is the lead Agency and the Adirondack Park Agency is an involved Agency; and

WHEREAS, a final environmental impact statement was completed by the Department of Environmental Conservation in May, 2006, with notice of completion published in the Environmental Notice Bulletin June 21, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Environmental Conservation has consulted with the Adirondack Park Agency staff in the preparation of the proposed plan; and

WHEREAS, the Agency is requested to determine whether the final Jessup River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan, dated May, 2006, is consistent with the general guidelines and criteria of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Adirondack Park Agency has reviewed the proposed Jessup River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Department has committed to provide the Agency with campsite analysis, relocation, stabilization and erosion management plans for primitive tent sites within the Indian Lake Islands Administrative Camping Area which will be implemented within the next three years and on which the Department has committed to provide the Agency with a report on the status of campsite analysis and relocation by December, 2006 to allow the Agency to review the campsite configuration for compliance with the State Land Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Department intends to stabilize shoreline access points, evaluate site conditions and implement corrective measures at Indian Lake campsites; and

WHEREAS, the Department intends to develop Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) standards for primitive tent sites, monitor primitive tent sites annually, designate Master Plan compliant sites by Year Three of the plan, close and revegetate camping sites that do not comply with SLMP guidelines, restore closed campsites to a natural condition, adopt group size regulations and designate group camping locations; and

WHEREAS, the Department had committed to provide an update on implementation progress of the Indian Lake campsite analysis within three years; and

WHEREAS, the Department has committed to closing fourteen campsites in the vicinity of Mason Lake due to over-crowding and deteriorated site conditions, and committed to continued consultation with Agency staff on primitive tent site design standards; and

WHEREAS, the Department intends to obtain better use data through the more frequent monitoring of existing trail registers and installation of additional registers at known access points; and

WHEREAS, the Plan has been developed to insure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act in the design and construction of all structures and improvements and to provide opportunities for access by people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Department intends undertake an inventory to determine the presence and extent of invasive plant species, conduct periodic monitoring for invasive plant populations,

prevent the establishment of non-native invasive vegetation, develop standards for vegetative conditions in camping and riparian areas, monitor conditions to insure compliance with standards, and facilitate containment and eradication work through the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program; and

WHEREAS, the Department intends to identify all known cultural, historical and archaeological resources in the Unit, to enhance public knowledge about these resources and coordinate activities affecting them with the State Museum and NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; and

WHEREAS, the Department intends to insure that areas adjacent to travel corridors and Scenic Byways are managed in compliance with SLMP travel corridor guidelines, to identify potential scenic or recreational pull-offs, and to assist the Department of Transportation with the preparation of travel corridor unit management planning efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Department intends to prevent illegal motorized use; research and clarify private legal access rights in the unit; close road sections that serve no public motor vehicle purpose; inventory open roads to determine maintenance needs and priorities; and provide for adequate maintenance of open roads in order to enhance access to recreational opportunities consistent with SLMP requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Department has committed to evaluate appropriate motorless primitive tent site opportunities along the Indian Lake shoreline within the Siamese Pond Wilderness and Jessup River Wild Forest; and

WHEREAS, the Department and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, in consultation with the Agency, will be working to complete the snowmobile planning effort for the Adirondack Park, and will continue to consult with Agency staff on snowmobile trail guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the issue of no material increase of snowmobile trail mileage will be calculated on a Park-wide basis; and

WHEREAS, the Jessup River Unit Management Plan commits the Department and the Agency to address the issue of snowmobile trail guidelines within two years of adoption of this plan or through the completion of the Adirondack snowmobile planning process; and

WHEREAS, the Department has agreed to further consultation with Agency staff and a future Plan amendment to determine the final configuration of snowmobile trails in the area of Route 30; and

WHEREAS, the Department has agreed to monitor equestrian trails for the possible spread of invasive species; and

WHEREAS, the Department has committed to further consultation with Agency staff regarding maintenance of an area on the summit of Pillsbury Mountain for helicopter use; and

WHEREAS, the Department has committed to continued consultation with Agency staff regarding the configuration of group camping tent sites for the Northville-Placid Trail in the vicinity of Piseco Airport; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act, the Adirondack Park Agency finds the Jessup River Wild Forest Unit Management Plan, dated May, 2006, conforms with the general guidelines and criteria of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that consistent with the social, economic and other essential considerations, from among the reasonable alternatives, the proposed Final UMP seeks to minimize or avoid adverse environmental effects to the maximum extent practicable, including the effects disclosed in the environmental impact statement; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Adirondack Park Agency authorizes its Executive Director to advise the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation of the Agency's determination in this matter.

AYES: R. Beach (DED), S. Buchanan (DEC),
R. Hoffman (DOS), A. Lussi, J. Townsend,
L. Ulrich, C. Wray, R. Whaley

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: K. Roberts

Acknowledgments

REGION 5 PLANNING TEAM:

UMP Coordinator & Lead Author: Thomas Kapelewski, Senior Forester
Lands & Forests: Rick Fenton, Supervising Forester
Public Protection: Greg George, Thomas Eakin, John Seifts, Mark Kralovic,
Forest Rangers
John Ellithorpe, Environmental Conservation Officer, Lt.
Fisheries: Bill Miller (retired), Rich Preall, Senior Aquatic Biologists
Wildlife: Paul Jensen, Senior Wildlife Biologist
Water: Scott Quinn, Research Scientist 3
Operations: Wayne Blanchard (retired), Conservation Operations
Supervisor III, Bruce Richards, Conservation Operations
Supervisor I
Adirondack Park Agency: Walt Linck, State Land Program Assistant

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS:

This Unit Management Plan (UMP) represents a mosaic of contributions which have come from many people, both inside and outside of State government. Although much of the information contained within this document was developed by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) staff, public input via meetings and general correspondence was important during several stages of the planning process. The plan has benefitted significantly from this valuable input from citizens, local government and organization representatives. Ultimately, the plan is the collective achievement of all the people who participated in the process.

Disclaimer: The listing of a named contributor does not imply that the individual or group supports the management recommendations in the plan.

DEC Staff: Bob Inslerman-retired, John English-retired, Joe Dematties-retired, Robert Gosson-retired, Kurt Armstrong-Senior Wildlife Biologist, Brian Finlayson- Cartographic Technician III, Scott Orr-Land Surveyor, Jim McEnaney-Conservation Operations Supervisor III, Paul Dunham-General Mechanic, Tom Atwell-Conservation Operations Supervisor II, John Garrigan-Maintenance Assistant, and Fred Midgley-Laborer. Additional thanks to: Pete Gradoni, Al Breisch, Tim Post, Sheila Tuttle, Ed Reed, Dave Winchell, Tom Martin, Karyn Richards, Rob Messenger, Charles Vandrei, Stephanie Schmid, Tad Norton, Eric Kasza, Ken Hamm, and Carol Fraser.

APA Staff: Richard Weber, Sunita Halasz, Henry Savarie, and Charles Scrafford-retired.

For a public participation summary and UMP mailing list see Section III-E and Appendix 11. Some of the individuals and organizations that contributed detailed information or comments on the plan include:

Adirondack Council - Jaime Ethier

The Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks - Kevin Prickett

Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) - Neil F. Woodworth, Bill Coffin, Tim Tierny, Betty Lou Bailey, and Bill Ingersoll.

Adirondack Nature Conservancy - Hilary Oles and Steven Flint

Adirondack Ski Touring Council - Tony Goodwin

Forest Preserve Advisory Committee Member - Barbara McMartin

Hudson River Black River Regulating District - Robert Foltan
International Paper (IP) - Robert Stegemann and Mike Gersten
Indian Lake Chamber of Commerce - Paul Tinney
Local snowmobile club - Dave Turner (Pleasant Riders)
NYS Snowmobile Association - Paul Allen
North Country Trail Association - Albert Larmann
Residents' Committee of the Adirondacks - Peter Bauer
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry - Chad Dawson and Jennifer Gagnon
Local Government - Special thanks to: Town of Arietta Supervisor - Jim Bernier, Dick Amadon (previous supervisor), Town of Indian Lake Supervisor - Barry Hutchins, Town of Lake Pleasant Supervisor - Frank Mezzano, Town of Wells Supervisor - Brian Towers, and other town staff.
Adjoining landowners - Nancy Randall (Back Log Camp), Dick and Bruce Catlin (Timberlock) and Chuck Gieser (Deerfoot Lodge), Indian Lake Association - Jon Voorhees, other members of the lake association and lakefront owners.

PREFACE

The Jessup River Wild Forest (JRWF) Unit Management Plan has been developed pursuant to, and is consistent with, relevant provisions of the New York State Constitution, the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), the Executive Law, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP or “Master Plan”), Department of Environmental Conservation (“Department”) rules and regulations, Department policies and procedures and the State Environmental Quality and Review Act.

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

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

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

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

The APSLMP places State land within the Adirondack Park into the following classifications: Wilderness; Primitive; Canoe; Wild Forest; Intensive Use; Historic; State Administrative; Wild,

Scenic and Recreational Rivers; and Travel Corridors. The lands which are the subject of this UMP are classified by the APSLMP and described herein as the Jessup River Wild Forest.

For all State lands falling within each major classification, the APSLMP sets forth management guidelines and criteria. These guidelines and criteria address such matters as: structures and improvements; ranger stations; the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment and aircraft; roads, jeep trails and State truck trails; flora and fauna; recreation use and overuse; boundary structures and improvements and boundary markings.

Executive Law §816 requires the Department to develop, in consultation with the APA, individual UMPs for each unit of land under the Department's jurisdiction which is classified in one of the nine classifications set forth in the APSLMP. The UMPs must conform to the guidelines and criteria set forth in the APSLMP. Thus, UMPs implement and apply the APSLMPs general guidelines for particular areas of land within the Adirondack Park. Executive Law §816(1) provides in part that *“(u)ntil amended, the master plan for management of state lands and the individual management plans shall guide the development and management of state lands in the Adirondack Park.”*

PURPOSE AND NEED

Without a UMP, the management of these public lands can easily become a series of uncoordinated reactions to immediate problems. No new facility construction, designation, or major rehabilitation can be undertaken until a UMP is completed and approved, with current management limited to routine maintenance and emergency actions. A written plan stabilizes management despite changes in personnel and integrates related legislation, legal codes, rules and regulations, policies, and area specific information into a single reference document. Other benefits of the planning process that are valuable to the public include the development of area maps, fishing information handouts, and a greater awareness of recreational opportunities and needs within specific areas of the Adirondack Park. In view of tight budgets and competition for monetary resources, plans that clearly identify area needs have greater potential for securing necessary funding, legislative support, and public acceptance.

This document provides a comprehensive inventory of natural resources, existing facilities and uses, while identifying the special values which justify the protection of this area in perpetuity for future generations. The process involved the gathering and analysis of existing uses and conditions, regional context and adjacent land considerations, future trends, and the identification of important issues. Ordinarily, the plan will be revised on a five-year cycle, but may be amended when necessary in response to changing resource conditions or administrative needs. Completion of the various management actions within this UMP will be dependent upon adequate manpower and funding. Where possible, the DEC will work with volunteer groups, local communities, town and county governments, and pursue alternative funding sources to accomplish some of the proposed projects or maintenance.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

This UMP is intended to be a working document, easily used by both State personnel and the public. Footnotes are placed at the bottom of the page and provide more detailed information. Specific references are cited and are included in the bibliography. The content of each section is briefly summarized below:

Section I introduces the area, provides a general description with information on the size and location of the unit, access, and a brief chronology of the history of the general area.

Section II provides an inventory of the natural, scenic, cultural, fish and wildlife, and associated resources along with an analysis of the area's ecosystems. Existing facilities for both public and administrative use are identified, along with an assessment of public use and carrying capacity. Adjacent land uses, access, and impacts are also discussed.

Section III includes descriptions of past management activities, existing management guidelines, management principles important for achieving the classification objectives for the unit, and an outline of issues identified through the inventory process with input from the planning team and public. This section lays the foundation for the development of specific management strategies necessary to attain the goals and objectives of the APSLMP. An assessment of needs and projected use are also discussed.

Section IV will identify specific management proposals as they relate to natural resources, uses, or facilities. These proposed actions will be consistent with the management guidelines and principles and will be based on information gathered during the inventory process, through public input and in consultation with the planning team. This section also identifies management philosophies for the protection of the area while providing for use consistent with its carrying capacity.

Section V includes a schedule for implementation and identifies the budget needs to carry out the work described in the UMP.

Section VI deals specifically with areas of major concern that require special attention in Special Area Management Plans. These subplans were developed for locations identified during the inventory and assessment phase of the planning process, public comment, or through dialogue with the planning team. Factors considered in defining these special areas included recreational impacts, significant biological or physical features, and patterns or degree of public use. This section will identify and discuss specific, alternative management recommendations, when needed for the Fawn/Sacandaga Lakes, Fall Lake/Fall Stream, Mason Lake, Watch Hill, Indian Lake Islands Administrative Camping Area, and Indian Lake/Lewey Lake/Lake Abanakee locations.

At the end of the text is a list of cited references, general bibliography, and various technical appendices. Relevant definitions and APSLMP quotations used within this document are from the approved November 1987, Updated 2001 edition. Map inserts show detailed area information.

WHAT THE PLAN DOES NOT DO

The proposed management actions identified in this plan are primarily confined to the Jessup River Wild Forest lands and waters. Activities on adjacent State lands or private property are beyond the scope of this document and will only be discussed as they relate to uses and impacts to the JRWF. In addition, this UMP cannot suggest changes to Article XIV, Section 1 of the New York State Constitution or conflict with statutory mandates or DEC policies. All proposals must conform to the guidelines and criteria set forth in the APSLMP and cannot propose to amend the Master Plan itself.

RECENT UPDATES

Town of Arietta Reclassification

In 2004, a 145 acre portion of the Silver Lake Wilderness was reclassified to JRWF in the town of Arietta. Changes due to this process and information concerning the relocation of an existing snowmobile trail on the reclassified lands have been documented in this plan.

International Paper Company Lands (Perkins Clearing/Speculator Tree Farm Areas)

In celebration of 2004 Earth Day, Governor George E. Pataki announced the largest land conservation project in New York State history. The Department of Environmental Conservation, International Paper Company (IP) and The Conservation Fund have partnered to preserve nearly 260,000 acres encompassing nine counties and 34 towns within the Adirondack Park. This conservation easement will provide the public with new recreational opportunities and permanently conserve the property as a working forest under sustainable forestry guidelines while continuing to support local economies.

As a part of the acquisition process, DEC is required to develop a Recreation Management Plan for IP lands subject to a Conservation Easement. This includes part of the Crotched Pond tract, Speculator Tree Farm and Perkins Clearing. To facilitate and manage the recreational activities of the general public until a full plan can be prepared, the Department will prepare an Interim Recreation Plan, for approval by IP. In addition, the Interim Plan will identify uses and interim stewardship proposals for adjacent lands to be acquired fee title. While the scale and extent of recreational activities on IP lands are still being decided, this UMP will acknowledge the relationship between JRWF and adjacent IP lands.

State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA)

The State Environmental Quality Review Act requires that all agencies determine whether the actions they undertake may have a significant impact on the environment. The intent of the legislation is to avoid or minimize adverse impact on the resource. The guidelines established in the APSLMP for developing unit management plans express these same concerns. Any development within the JRWF presented in the plan must take into consideration environmental factors to insure that such development does not degrade that environment. The overall intent of this UMP is to identify mitigating measures to avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts to the natural resources of the State within the unit. Any reconstruction or development within the confines of this unit will take environmental factors into account to ensure that such development does not degrade the resource.

As required by SEQRA, during the planning process a range of alternatives were formulated to evaluate possible management approaches for dealing with certain issues or problem locations. Department staff considered the no-action and other reasonable alternatives, whenever possible. Potential environmental impacts, resource protection, visitor safety, visitor use and enjoyment of natural resources, user conflicts, interests of local communities and groups, and short and long-term cost-effectiveness were important considerations in the selection of proposed actions. Efforts were made to justify reasons for the proposals throughout the body of the UMP so the public can clearly understand the issues and the rationale for Department decision making.

Due to the significance of potential environmental and/or social impacts, a positive declaration was determined to be necessary. A Positive Declaration was issued through a press release/Notice of Intent document. This UMP constitutes the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The initial draft UMP is reviewed internally by DEC and APA staff, with necessary changes made prior to the draft UMPs distribution for public review. At this time, a press release is issued and a public meeting scheduled to receive public comments on the draft plan/draft EIS. A Notice of Hearing will then be published in the Environmental News Bulletin and local newspapers, and the public meeting held in conjunction with a public hearing to comply with SEQRA requirements.

A minimum 30-day public comment period follows the public meeting, during which time written comments may also be submitted regarding the plan. At the end of the public comment period, all public comment received on the draft plan is assessed, and appropriate changes are made to the plan. If a DEIS has been prepared, a Final EIS is prepared, along with a SEQRA Findings Statement. The final UMP/final EIS is then reviewed by the APA staff and Commissioners to determine its consistency with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. Subsequently, the final UMP/final EIS is approved by the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation, printed and distributed. A Notice of Completion of final EIS is issued and SEQRA findings are then filed.

No Action Alternative or Need for a Plan

From a legal perspective, the No Action alternative of not writing a UMP is not an option. DEC is required to prepare a management plan for the JRWF pursuant to the APSLMP and Executive Law § 816. In addition a UMP serves as a mechanism for the Department to study and identify potential areas for providing access to the JRWF for persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA of 1990). The UMP also serves as an administrative vehicle for the identification and removal of nonconforming structures as required by the APSLMP.

From an administrative perspective, the “No Action” alternative is not an option. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has the statutory responsibility under Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) §§3-0301(1)(d) and 9-0105(1), to provide for the care, custody, and control of these public lands. The UMP will provide the guidance necessary for staff to manage the area in a manner that protects the environment while at the same time providing for suitable outdoor recreation opportunities for the public. Without the development and future

implementation of the UMP, sensitive environmental resources of the unit could be impacted negatively and it is highly likely that the public enjoyment of such resources would decrease. Public use problems would continue to occur.

Management of the JRWF via a UMP will allow the Department to improve public use and enjoyment of the area, avoid user conflicts and prevent over use of the resource (e.g., through trail designations, access restrictions, placement of campsites and lean-tos away from sensitive resource, etc.). Management Alternatives were developed for some of the UMP proposals that may: (1) have significant environmental impacts, (2) involve facility closures, or (3) involve controversial actions changing existing public use, and can be found in Section IV and VI of this document.