

SUNDOWN
(formerly Claryville-Sundown-Sholam)
WILD FOREST
UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN

APRIL 1996

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

George Pataki,
Governor

Michael D. Zagata,
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM FROM
MICHAEL D. ZAGATA, *Commissioner*

New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

APR 16 1996

TO: The Record

RE: Unit Management Plan (UMP)
Sundown Wild Forest

A UMP for the Sundown Wild Forest has been completed. The UMP is consistent with the guidelines and criteria of the Catskill Park State Land Master Plan, the State Constitution, Environmental Conservation Law, and Department rules, regulations and policies. The UMP includes management objectives for a five year period and is hereby approved and adopted.



Commissioner

SUNDOWN WILD FOREST UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN

PREFACE

This unit includes over 27,000 acres of land and forms the south and southeasterly border of the Catskill Park. A varied topography and an impressive mix of natural features -- mountains, waterfalls, valleys, and gentler topography -- will in the future attract increasing numbers of outdoors people. The purpose of this plan is to protect the Forest Preserve as called for by the State Constitution, while benefiting visitors and the local economy in the Towns of Denning, Wawarsing, Rochester and Olive in Ulster County and the Town of Neversink in Sullivan County. The unit is accessible from many county and town roads shown on the location and access maps on the following pages.

The unit begins near the Ashokan reservoir in the northeast, stretches to the Rondout Reservoir in the south, and is bisected north to south by Rondout Creek and the East Branch of the Neversink River. The lands are part of the Hardenburgh Patent (Great Lots 5 and 6), and the Marletown Patent. Although the unit contains six parcels of land, two of the largest parcels are connected by the Peekamoose Valley Wild Forest.

Some of the area's notable landmarks are:

1. High Point (3080 feet), overlooking the Ashokan Reservoir (Town of Olive)
2. Vernooy Kill Falls (Town of Rochester)
3. Denman Mountain and the Hog Rocks (Town of Neversink)
4. Red Hill Fire Tower

This draft plan identifies the natural and man-made resources, which make up this wild forest, as well as some of the historical and cultural influences which have shaped the region. Issues and constraints effecting the unit are identified, and goals and objectives developed to govern the area's future management. A number of projects are proposed to fulfill these goals and objectives. Although much of the information contained within this plan was developed by department staff, public input was essential in the decision making process.

Accomplishing the goals and projects outlined here will depend on adequate budget appropriations. However, whenever possible, the Department will cooperate with volunteer groups and pursue other funding sources to accomplish the proposed projects.

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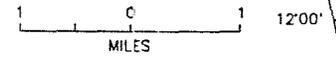
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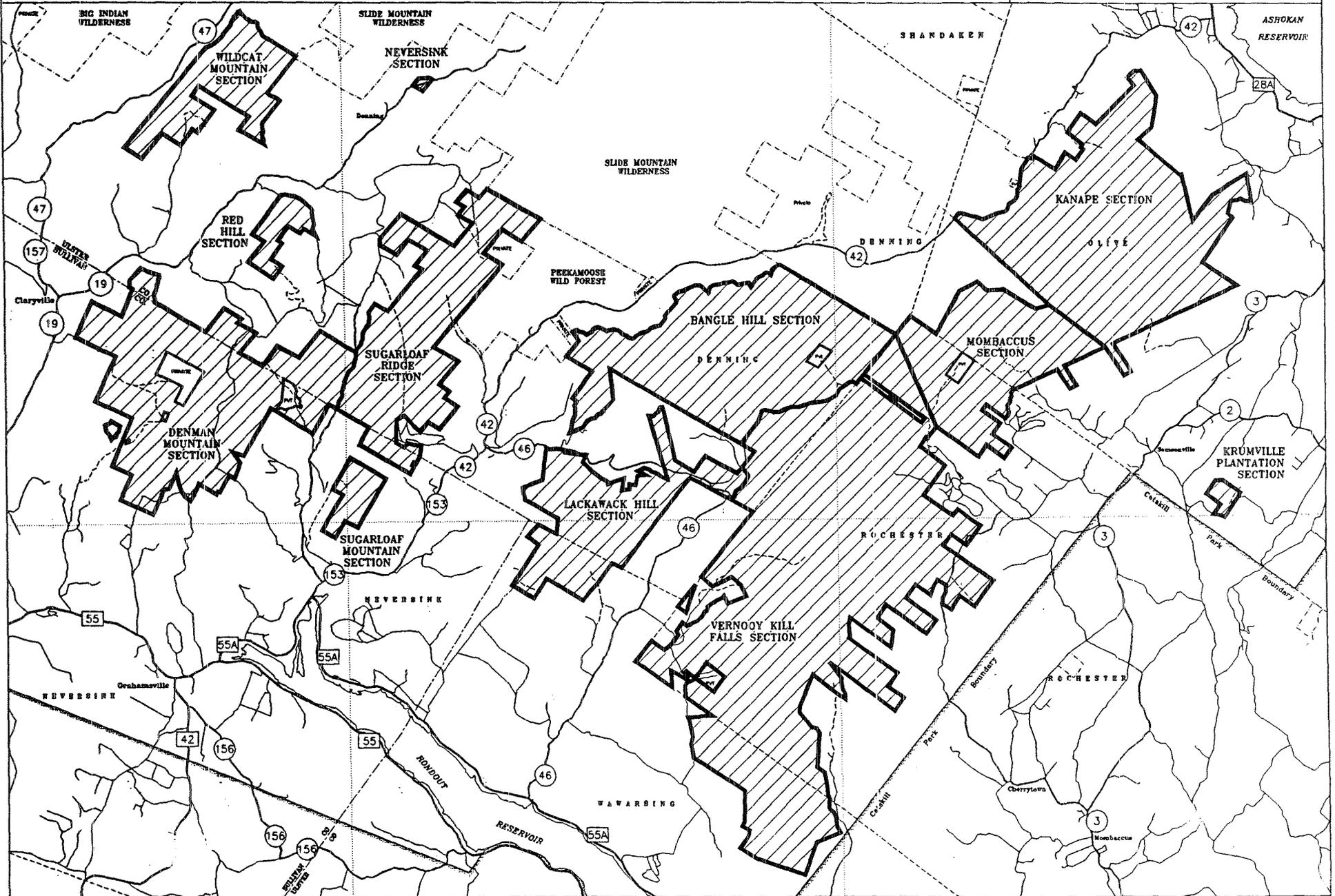
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SUNDOWN WILD FOREST Access Map

Magnetic North True North



1-5-95



I. INTRODUCTION

A. Area Description

The unit is bordered to the north by the 47,442 acre Slide Mountain-Panther Mountain Wilderness, to the west by the 14,870 acre Willowemoc-Long Pond Wild Forest, and is bisected by the 2,200 acre Peekamoose Valley Wild Forest. Management plans have been completed for these units. Where this unit abuts other Forest Preserve lands, no identifiable boundary exists.

The unit has seven unconnected properties. For discussion, it has been broken into six segments (key on page 57).

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>External boundary (miles)</u>
1.	Kanape - High Point	4080	14.4
2a.	Mombaccus - Rose Bone	1920	8.6
b.	Krumville Plantation	81	1.7
3.	Vernooy Kill Falls	8596	34.0
4.	Bangle Hill - Spencers Ledge	3355	9.4
5a.	Lackawack Hill	1771	12.4
b.	Sugarloaf Ridge	2408	14.8
c.	Sugarloaf Mountain South	254	3.4
6a.	Denman Mountain	3394	18.5
b.	Red Hill	279	3.3
c.	Wildcat Mt. South	1060	7.9
d.	Neversink River	16	0.65
	TOTAL:	27,214	129.05

There are several ridges over 2,000 feet in the unit. Mountains over 2,000 feet include:

High Point Mt.	3080
Denman Mt.	3053
Little Rocky (only part of summit on State land)	3015
Red Hill	2990
Wildcat Mt. Ridge South	2865
Mombaccus Mt.	2840
Samson Mt.	2812
Bangle Hill	2350
Big Rosy Bone	2220
Cherrytown Mt.	2000

In the southern Catskills, conditions for farming were better than in the north, although by no means easy. Remnants of farms, foundations, stone walls, stone piles, wells and springs, farm fields reverting to woodlands, conifer plantations, and patches of daylilies are common. Except for the ridges, this is farmland being reclaimed by nature. The names of former owners survive on the old landowner registers, and occasionally town roads.

B. Access

The map on page vi provides information on how to reach the unit. For additional information, U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps and several excellent Catskill guides, including a series of trail maps from the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, are available from sporting goods stores or hiking clubs. Also, see Chapter II, B, listing roads serving the unit.

C. History of Land Unit

1. Towns of Neversink, Denning, Rochester and Wawarsing

Part of the land of Kakalarimine, of Cacawolomin, of Moonhoaw and their tribe, the Rondout Valley was probably first used as a hunting ground by these and other Lenape Indians. Impressed by the vastness of the region, they named it Peekamoose, meaning "big place" in their language (Dice, pers. comm.). Other Algonquian Indian tribes undoubtedly used the area.

Then the Europeans arrived, giving their own names to many places. Most roads and mountains through the unit are named after an earlier settler, the first European owner and so forth. However, sometimes the origins of a place name are blurred. For example, another version of the origin of "Peekamoose" is found in the pages of the logbook maintained at Peekamoose Lodge. According to a 1909 entry by H. E. Ennist of Shokan, New York:

"Rev. J.W. Hammond boarded with John Bush in 1859 and on Breath Hill, spending a month in the region of the Rondout stream, returning from the dome shaped peak he called it 'Peak-of-Moss.' This was the first name given."

European history essentially started when a large piece of the Catskills was given to Johannis Hardenburgh and six other white men by Queen Anne of England in a grant known as the Hardenburg Patent in 1708. Chapters seven and eight of "The Catskills" by Alf Evers (1972) give an excellent description of the granting of the patent.

Ulster County was once much larger, including Sullivan County, and parts of Orange, Greene and Delaware Counties. Likewise, the Town of Rochester also included Wawarsing, Neversink, and parts of Gardiner and Delaware County at one time.

Because the area was so far removed from any settlement, the solitude of this region's hillsides remained undisturbed for more than a hundred years before the hemlocks attracted the bark peelers. Migration was south and west, so the easterly segments of Marbletown were settled first (Terwilliger, 1977). However, Quinlan (1873) notes that except for the few families in the Lackawack Valley, there were no white residents of the [Town of] Neversink prior to 1788. Notwithstanding, the farms of the southern Catskills were more fertile than farther north and fifty years earlier the Town of Neversink already produced more sheep and apples than any other Town in Sullivan County. From the early 1700's until 1809 settlers from the Grahamsville area would bring their grain to Peter Vernooey's Mill, near present day Vernooey Falls in Wawarsing for grinding. Some carried the grain on their backs (Quinlan, 1873). This grist mill was the first in the Town of Wawarsing. In places, the old road from Yagerville to Cherrytown Road can still be followed.

According to documents, Cornelius Vernooey, his wife and child left Holland in 1664. Vernooey appears to be the first person in the area who lived on land he himself owned. He bought four hundred acres in 1702 from Anna Beek Phenix (the land was part of the Beek Patent granted in 1685). The Beek Patent was bought from the Indians (1684) with duffels (a course cloth of the time) and other clothes, and confirmed under the royal authority of Thomas Dongan, Governor General of New York (Terwilliger, 1977).

Downstream on the Vernooey Kill, in the mid-1850's, Francis F. Potter built a sawmill. Quite a settlement of people followed until 1870 when the mill burned and his family moved away. Only the name Potterville and a few dilapidated buildings survive on this large private property (known commonly as the Lundy Estate) adjacent to State land (Terwilliger, 1977). This ghost town once had a man-made lake.

William Denman emigrated from England in the late 1790's and settled three miles from Grahamsville on what is today Denman Mountain (the second highest peak in Sullivan County). His family was praised for its probity, thrift, good sense and respectability (Quinlan, 1873). His name survives to the present.

William Denning bought the central part of today's Town of Denning from a Philadelphia land grant corporation that failed to pay its taxes, for less than a cent an acre. By 1841 William H. Denning had bought land from the Denning heirs and others until he owned over 24,000 acres. The Town of Denning was formed from Shandaken in 1849. Early maps of Denning show eight sawmills and turning mills operating in the Sundown Valley (Elias, 1993). Among the earliest settlers recorded in Denning are John Bush (1830's) and Anthony Schwab of Red Hill (late 1840's).

Some of the tanneries operating in the Greene County Catskills moved southwards. Others left the State for the hemlock forests in Pennsylvania. The War with Mexico in 1846 gave a powerful boost to the tanning industry by raising the profits high enough to attract new capital and energy (Quinlan, 1873). Among these was the tannery started by Palen and Hammond in Samsonville (then Palentown) in the Town of Rochester. After passing through several owners, it became the property of Zaddock Pratt and Henry A. Sampson, a Brig. General in the Civil War, (Davis, undated; Van Steenberg Sickler, 1973). These tannery owners built a road across the Rondout running well up Peekamoose Mountain (Elias, 1993).

James Eldridge Quinlan wrote: "There's an old saying, 'The Civil War was won with the boots tanned in Sullivan County,'" In 1860, \$7,034,438 worth of tanned leather was manufactured in the Catskills. Sullivan County accounted for half. In 1860, the Town of Neversink had 2180 people, by 1963 only 1,555. Grahamsville (Neversink), Claryville and Dewittville (Denning) all had tanneries. The Claryville Tannery, built 1848, employed fifty men and made 30,000 sides of leather each year. Founded by Colonel Gideon E. Bushnell, the tannery eventually came to be known as the Bushnell and Snyder Tannery. At one time Claryville had two tanneries (the other was the DeWitt and Reynolds tannery), a couple of sawmills, a grist mill, and two hotels for overnight guests (New York State Water Resources Institute, 1992; Elias, 1993). A tannery chimney remains today. The Palen tannery on the falls of the Neversink had 40 workers, making 25,000 sides of leather. An excellent short history of Claryville and Sundown is provided by Elias (1993). A man and his oxen were paid 75¢ for a half days work in 1829 (Sullivan County Civil War Centennial Commission, 1963). Hemlock bark harvested from the headwaters of the upper Rondout Creek was taken to the Metropolitana tannery in Watson Hollow, Denning (NYS DEC, 1990; NYS DEC, 1993; Purcell, 1978). Before this tannery opened, hemlock bark was probably taken from Peekamoose valley to Grahamsville.

"On Denman Mountain, opposite the monolith of the Bushnell Tannery Tower in Claryville, a score of virgin white pines tower against the skyline. On the east slope of Red Hill, a handful of red spruce were left, too isolated to cut down. With the exception of a few elderly apple trees, practically every tree has grown over the past 130 years. In 1860, Sullivan County had 39 tanneries, more than any other in the State (Ulster County had thirty)" (Sullivan County Civil War Centennial Commission, 1963).

Tremendous amounts of hemlock bark, and rarely, oak bark, were removed. One cord of bark (four by four by eight feet) would tan ten hides (three to ten trees were needed to obtain one cord). The bark was removed from the butt to the first limb. The trees were very slow to rot, so many of the people who settled the lands burned them. A few were cut into lumber to provide the first really good roads, the plank turnpikes (Sullivan County Civil War Centennial Commission, 1963). However, 95% of the barkless, fallen trees were left in the woods (Kudish, 1971). By the late

1880's, all but the most inaccessible hemlock stands had been cut and the tanneries were forced to close. Faster growing, more light tolerant hardwood species invaded the areas where the hemlock once dominated. Hemlocks can still be found in scattered stands, but the once vast hemlock forests are gone.

After this, several sawmills sprang up in the area. In New York's Forest, Fish and Game Report for 1900, a sawmill at Bull Run owned by S. M. Aldrich, was reported producing 10,000 board feet of spruce, 25,000 board feet hemlock and 50,000 of hardwoods. Ladles, scoops, piano bars, butter trays, furniture, shingles, planking, and barrel hoops were produced (NYS DEC, 1990) at many sawmills throughout the region. Two sawmills operated along Bear Hole Brook (Banta, 1988).

In March of 1870, a "great windfall," was caused by a heavy gale which blew northwest from Lackawack toward Delaware County throughout the night. Under the weight of snow and ice, timber was blown down over thousands of acres. For many years afterward, lost hunters could find their way by travelling parallel with the track of the great windfall (Quinlan, 1873).

Even though lumbering was the leading industry by the turn of the century, farming was still important (Clearwater, 1907). When Esther George's family settled in Sundown (1931), just about everyone had a herd of dairy cows (George, undated). Farms were not limited to the valley bottoms, as stone walls, old foundations and scattered apple trees can be found on many ridges and hillsides. Throughout the unit, mounds and columns of stones piled to occupy the smallest area of farm fields are scattered throughout meadows and second growth forests. Changes in the dairy industry after World War I eliminated most of the hill farms (New York State Water Resources Institute, 1992).

West of Potterville, at the base of westerly facing slopes, local residents report several stone pens were used during the earlier part of this century to trap bears. Along a nearby wetland, remnants can still be found of a steam engine sawmill and two logging camps.

The slopes left uncovered by the excessive removals of the tanning industry resulted in a series of severe floods never before experienced in the Catskills. By the First World War, the hemlock bark had played out along with the tanneries. After the slopes had been cut by the tanneries and other lumber industries, spring floods became an annual event, culminating in the particularly destructive flood of 1928 (New York State Water Resources Institute, 1992). Depopulation, the declining lumber industry and more responsible logging practices have allowed regrowth and erosion and flooding has subsided (New York State Water Resources Institute, 1992).

How Some Place Names Came About

The tiny hamlet of Ladletown was once called Pardeeville (after John Pardee). Ladletown gets its name from a wood turning factory that manufactured commercial ladles, paddles and spoons (New York State Water Resources Institute, 1992). DeWittville, once called Pottersville, was renamed after Abraham Dewitt, coowner of the Dewitt and Reynolds Tannery and the first Town Supervisor. (Elias, 1993).

Claryville was named after Clarissa, the wife of Stephen Curry, whose father, James Curry, in 1795 owned the lands on which it now stands. (Quinlan, 1873). However, Bob Dice, the Town of Neversink Historian, attributes Claryville to Clary Curry, the wife of farmer Jim Curry, who lived across from the Snyder and Bushnell Tannery (Elias, 1993).

Sholam, as it is now known, was once called Bruynsville after Edmund Bruyn. Sholam is the Hebrew word for peace (although in Yiddish the spelling is Shoalem). Here, in 1837, a small band of Jewish people bought 500 acres sight unseen to establish the first Jewish agricultural settlement in this country (Terwilliger, 1977). Most came from New York City, fleeing economic hardships. The colony failed by 1842 and the land was repossessed. David Divine took title at that time.

The origin of the name Lackawack is unclear. A few other versions of the same place are Lagewack, Laughawake, and Ragawack. A fort was probably located at Lackawack, but is said to have burned in 1781. The fort, constructed in 1779, might have been near Rte. 55 and the Rondout. Sugarloaf Creek was once called the Luren Kill (Terwilliger, 1977).

The peeling of hemlock bark for use in the tanning of hides (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 1990) brought many roads to the region. One of these was the plank road from Sundown to Napanoch. The tanning industry spurred development here, as in Claryville. Sundown takes its name from the area which then was heavily forested with very tall hemlocks so little sunlight reached the forest floor. Bathed in a green gloom, the sun always seemed to be going down. Hence the name Sundown.

2. Town of Olive (Kanape Area)

George Middagh (1740), was one of the earliest settlers recorded in Olive. The "Middagh lot" can still be found on old landowner maps of this area.

The Kanape stream and valley probably got its name from John Jones Canape, who along with Orson Avery, were the first farmers in the area. The Kanape woods road was once Avery-Freeman town road, connecting Watson Hollow and the Rondout

valley to the east. Mombaccus Mountain, across from High Point Mountain, probably gets its name from the Town of Mumbakkus, which was issued the Rochester Patent in 1703 in Queen Anne's name by the Governor of what was then the Province of New York. The Patent explained that the inhabitants had purchased the land from the Indians, had improved it, and were in quiet and peaceful possession of it. Life could best be described as "many children to raise, crops to tend with no mechanical help, animals to care for, and spinning and weaving" (Terwilliger, 1977).

At one time, up to eight sawmills operated in Watson Hollow. The stream in Traver Hollow which runs into the Bush Kill is named after Peter P. Traver, who built a sawmill on the stream there. Watson Hollow, through which Rte 42 (Watson Hollow Road) runs today, gets its name from Nathan W. Watson (from Canaan, Connecticut), whose tannery here in 1855-56 employed about 100 men and could process 100,000 finished hides a year. Men were employed in cutting the virgin timber, peeling the bark, stacking it for drying, and later hauling it to the tannery on wagons with wide bark racks (Davis, undated, Olive Free Library).

There were at least seven mills on the Watson Hollow stream above the present day Bushkill bridge (Davis, undated). Nelson North operated a mill on the South Hollow Stream, but moved to Michigan with his family in 1873. All these mills employed many people in sawing, building roads and supplying lumber. Along with the resident population in the hollow there was also a floating population of mostly Irish (Davis, undated).

The Kanape area has had more large fires than any other part of the Catskills). Several large and numerous smaller fires have created distinctive pitch pine-oak-heath rocky summits on High Point and the northerly and westerly ridgetops (Reschke, 1990). These summits (including meadows) have been repeatedly burned for over a century. Back in 1891, the Kanape Brook and SE slopes of High Point were already being burned by berry pickers (Kudish, 1971). Dense, almost impenetrable hardwood thickets cover the repeatedly burned ridge northwest of High Point. A search of Bureau of Forest Protection and Fire Management records since 1938, indicates fires of;

<u>Acres</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
125	October, 1946	Hoopole Mt., High Pt.
400	October, 1961	Watson Hollow
1000	Spring, 1969	Hoopole Mt., High Pt.
500	Spring, 1980	Hoopole Mt., High Pt.
2	Summer, 1993	High Point

To keep fires set by the locals to encourage blueberries from spreading, the staff of the old Conservation Department used scythes to create firebreaks at intervals on the High Point ridge in the 1940's and 50's. An old fire road starts on Hoopole Mountain.

In 1850 many people in the area worked picking wintergreen leaves and berries, and operating a distillery producing almost 400 gallons of strongly aromatic liquid a year. The low lying, sun loving plant was particularly common in the High Point Mountain area. Flax and sheep were often raised on the area's farms and the wool and flax fibers were processed by local carding mills (e.g. Samuel Adams Carding Mill) (Van Steenbergh Sickler, 1976).

Hoop shaving was carried out along with charcoal production. The peak west of High Point Mountain bears the name Hoopole Mountain. Cooperage, as it was also known, was something of a fine art. The best hoops were made from hickory and ash trees from the second and third growth forests after the original hemlocks were cut for bark. The work was done in Fall or Winter, in a small warm shed or shanty near the trees. Foreign countries sometimes contracted for the hoops; the price for finished hoops was \$3.50 - \$5.00 per thousand. The industry was replaced by more economical means to make hoops (Van Steenbergh Sickler, 1973).

By the 1850's, a vacation anywhere for miles around was considered incomplete without a visit to High Point (Davis, undated, Olive Free Library). The following passage is from Alonso T. Clearwater's History of Ulster County (1907, p. 326):

"The mountains of Olive are romantic and picturesque ... [from High Point] the view of the south, east and west has been called the finest in the Catskills. On High Point and Round Mountain [i.e. Little High Point], huckleberries abound. The Point is level on top and all about are great flat rocks where names have been cut by visitors, some of the inscriptions being very ancient. To the north and northwest is a succession of mountains as far as vision extends." (from Olive Natural Heritage Society, pers. comm.)

Today, the valleys continue to attract visitors and second homes. Local legends persist, describing a small pool of water on the summit of the High Point Mountain ridge which rises and falls with the tides reaching up the distant Hudson River (called "the tidal pool"). Legends were often started by enterprising hotel owners trying to make their area popular. A trail climbs up to a clearing on High Point Mountain. Local people say the anchors on the mountaintop were part of a water tower for an aborted attempt to build a mountain house "hotel." Not enough water was found on the site and the plan was abandoned. Others say a large flagpole on the mountain was once visible for miles. However, High Point was definitely the site of a U.S. Geological Survey Triangulation Tower because of its prominently visible location.

In "The Eden of the Catskills: A History of West Shokan," Elwyn Davis summarizes the fate of this area:

"With the burning of the [Watson] tannery about the winter of 1870, the star of Watson Hollow was setting, a temporary makeshift was used to take care of the supply of green hides and

bark not destroyed, but the tannery was not rebuilt. Already the surrounding mountains were being depleted of their supply of bark and timber. Many being thrown out of work, with their families left the hollow. One by one the mills were abandoned and fell into decay, making less and less employment, and only the established farmers remained."

In Canape [Kanape] Hollow, as elsewhere, the farms have gone back to nature, falling into ruins or burning.

Quarrying was an important industry throughout the northern half of this unit. The bluestone was used in cities for sidewalks, curbing and other construction. Henry Davis quarried from the blue stone ledges at the head of South Hollow (Davis, undated). Through South Hollow there are still found trail remnants and roads to Mount Ashokan (High Point) where Longstreth (1918) mentions the diggings of "deluded prospectors who thought they at last found gold." There were bluestone quarries at the foot of High Point and South Hollow, also Acorn Hill and Krumville (Van Steenbergh Sickler, 1973). The Coons boys operated on the Peekamoose Ridge (perhaps the origin of the name still carried by an the old town/woods road near Porcupine Road). The California quarry under High Point was another source of bluestone (Davis, unknown). Mine Hollow which enters Watson Hollow may have once had a small silver mine (Ulster County Historians, 1983). Today, rock piles in strange places are all that remain.

In 1875 the stone yard of Hewett Boice was the receiving point for much of the region's bluestone. In its later years, until closing in 1907, it was operated by Samuel Coykendall, who at intervals owned land throughout the area (Van Steenbergh Sickler, 1976).

D. Past Management

Most of the land in this unit was acquired by the State through county tax sales prior to 1930. More recently, lands were acquired with funding from the land acquisition bond acts approved by State voters.

The lands in this unit were acquired by New York State as Forest Preserve and their management has always been determined or guided by the "forever wild" clause of the State Constitution. Specific management activities have generally related to fire prevention, fish and wildlife management, and recreation.

The Long Path (a continuous, marked hiking trail originating in Fort Lee, New Jersey) passes through the Vernooy Kill-Bangle Hill segments of this unit on its way northward to Windham in the northern Catskills, and beyond. In the Forest Preserve,

the Long Path uses hiking trails built by the DEC. The section of Long Path from Riggsville to the Peekamoose Valley via Bull Run was blazed by the New York/ New Jersey Trail Conference in the 1960's. Since 1985 this section of the Long Path has been maintained by volunteers from the Trail Conference through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department.

A parking lot was built by the Town of Neversink along Moore Hill Road on Denman Mountain in 1974 as part of a road improvement. Although plans were made to place a sign at the location, the follow up was never completed. Past management, and especially utility and access right-of-way issues are described under issues and projects of each unit segment or the easements section (Chapter II, B).

II. INVENTORY, USE, CAPACITY OF THE RESOURCE TO WITHSTAND USE

A. Natural Resources

1. Vegetation

The description of forests and fields -- revegetating farm fields, spruce and pine plantations, second growth northern hardwoods (NYS DEC, 1990) or slope forests (Kudish, 1971) -- is similar to other parts of the Catskills. The dominant trees are sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) and basswood (*Tilia americana*). Understory species include striped maple (*Acer pennsylvanicum*), ironwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*), hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), witchhazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), witch hobble (*Viburnum alnifolium*), sugar maple and beech. Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), elm (*Ulmus* spp.), aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), and red maple are some of the trees found along floodplains.

An excellent reference on the Town of Olive part of the Wild Forest is "The Ashokan Catskills - A Natural History (Bierhorst, 1995).

Fires have affected several hundred acres of Denman and Cherrytown Mountains over the last 10 years (See Chapter I, C. History of Land Unit). However, they have substantially altered the forest composition and appearance of the Hoopole - High Point Ridge near the Kanape and South Hollow for at least two hundred years. Here, hundreds of acres have burned repeatedly. Repeated fires, mostly by blueberry pickers, were already common in 1891. In 1891, about 100 acres, mostly scrub, burned on the southeast slopes of High Point (Kudish, 1971). These repeated fires have stopped succession, creating the unique pitch pine-oak-heath rocky summits (without pitch pines) which are discussed earlier in the history section of this chapter.

Tanning hides using hemlock bark, charcoal production, hoop manufacture (cooperage), farming, water powered mills (saw, carding, and tanning), bluestone quarrying, berry picking, and even wintergreen oil production have all altered the face and character of most of the Forest Preserve lands in this unit. On the Kanape, these past practices have created and helped perpetuate some of the more unique natural communities in the Catskills.

No endangered or threatened plants or communities have been identified in the unit. However, the wetlands and wooded swamps of the Vernooy Kill area, the oak-heath rocky summits of High Point Mountain, and the rocky slopes where rattlesnakes (a threatened species) concentrate are not common in the Catskill Region. Disturbance in the wetlands and near rattlesnake dens will be avoided. The heath meadows (or balds) and summits were caused by the thin soils on the flat summit of High Point's massive sandstone cap and repeated fires. The unique plant community is both tough

and fragile. The plant's depend on fire disturbance, but changes have been noticed in high pedestrian traffic areas (Bierhorst, [1995], pers. comm.). However, if fire is eliminated, this area will slowly be replaced by oaks and eventually the shade tolerant trees common throughout the Catskills. Kudish (pers. comm.) mentions the largest stand of American Chestnut he has observed in the Catskills is between 2500 and 2700 feet on the westerly slopes of High Point. He reported prolific sprouting during his visit in 1984, after the 1980 500-acre fire.

A good example of a mature northern hardwood forest (Beech-Maple Mesic Forest) is found in the South Hollow Brook Ravine, between elevation 1440 and 2650 feet (about 100 acres). The beech maple mesic forest is ranked G4, S4, unprotected, which means this is a "high quality" example of a plant community quite common in New York State and the world. (see also Comment/Response #6, Appendix A.)

The High Point massif (High Point-South Hollow-Kanape Brook) has been identified as an area of noteworthy biodiversity, including among other species the boreal bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) and three-toothed cinquefoil (*Potentilla tridentata*), hyssop skullcap (*Scutellaria integrifolia*), three-birds orchid (*triphora triantophora*), Bush's sedge (*Carex bushii*) and orchids (*Platanthera* spp.) The common raven (*Corvus corax*) breeds within the area. These species require a diverse habitat ranging from wetland and wet meadow to dry and fire prone. All can be affected by overuse, a strong indication that vehicle traffic, structures, and all but pedestrian trail uses should be limited throughout this area (see also Comment/Response # 6, Appendix A).

Since most of what we see today has been heavily influenced by people, historical information helps us understand the changes. For example, the tanbark industry had a great effect on vegetation (See Chapter I, C. History of Land Unit). Today's Forest Preserve lands provided the natural resources for the valley towns, whose fortunes ebbed and flowed throughout the centuries. The area is wilder today than it has been for more than 200 years. However, it is not a wilderness. As we have seen, very few of the original trees have been left standing and most areas still bear signs of repeated, though fleeting attempts to gain a foothold. Natural events have always been stronger.

2. Water and Fisheries

The following is a description of the fisheries resources and concerns in the Sundown Wild Forest Area. Listed below is an inventory of the major fisheries resources by quadrangle map name. A list of all the documented species found in the UMP is included in Appendix B.

Most of the water resources within this area flow directly into some of the major fisheries resources of the Catskills. Rondout Creek, Ashokan Reservoir, and the East and West Branches of the Neversink River all share the water from this area (Francis, 1983). Many of the small streams that run through this unit and connect to these resources are intermittent and therefore are limited in their potential for fishing. Some of the streams are undoubtedly important as spawning streams in the fall for brook trout and brown trout and in the spring for rainbow trout in the Ashokan Reservoir tributaries. Landlocked Atlantic salmon also spawn in the fall in the West Branch Neversink River directly downstream of the unit. Very limited information has been gathered from many of the small streams in the area. Fairly good information however is available from some of the larger fisheries resources within and nearby the unit, which is included below.

The Rondout Creek, which passes through the Peekamoose Valley, is a medium gradient stream with a good quality habitat, with cold waters and good shading. Fish surveys from 1936 on have been very consistent, finding brook, brown, and rainbow trout; blacknose and longnose dace, white sucker and slimy sculpin. Brook trout are found throughout the Rondout Creek from the Rondout Reservoir to the source, while brown trout tend to prefer the lower reaches of this section. Rainbow trout, once stocked here, may still be present on occasion. The Rondout's tributaries most likely have similar fish populations.

Claryville Quadrangle

The West Branch Neversink River (D-1-83) sees a landlocked Atlantic salmon spawning run in the fall from the Neversink Reservoir (P60-D). Where barriers are not present these fish will move into the tributaries near the unit. The upstream barrier to salmon passage in the West Branch is just upstream of Fall Brook at an area known locally as Leroy Pool. This is located downstream of one part of the unit. The salmon enter the streams to spawn for the most part after the close of trout season on September 30 and do not provide a fishery although the observation of the fish may provide for interesting recreation. Salmon were first stocked in the Neversink system in the 1950's. The current state program started in 1975. Brook trout are native and occur in the river above Leroy Pool. There is no public fishing access above the Neversink Reservoir. However, this area is rich in angling tradition and access to the stream in this section would be desirable (see also Section IV, B2).

Below is a list of streams and rivers in or adjacent to the Sundown Wild Forest, with brief descriptions and comments on key fisheries resources. The abbreviation NSA = Natural spawning adequate to support angling opportunities for the listed species.

Peekamoose Mountain Quadrangle

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Description/remarks</u>
D1-82	E. Br. Neversink R.	Neversink parcel. Small detached parcel surrounds river. Brook and brown trout with very low productivity. Probably acid impacted.
D1-83	W. Br. Neversink R.	Near Frost Valley YMCA property across from High Falls Brook (vicinity of Wildcat Mountain South parcel). Access, if possible, needed for area. (see also Claryville Quad.)
H139-14-35	Vernooy Kill	NSA brown trout
H139-53	Sundown Creek	NSA Brook and brown trout
H139-53-2	Unnamed	Permanent, sections intermittent.
H139-53-1	Unnamed	Intermittent
H139-49	Unnamed	NSA Brook and brown trout. Headwaters in unit.
H139-54	Unnamed	Intermittent
H139-55	High Falls Brook	Brook trout
H139-58c, 58d, 58e	Unnamed	Intermittent

Rondout Reservoir Quadrangle

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Description/Remarks</u>
H139-P811-44	Trout Brook (Creek)	Upper headwaters in unit. Barriers to fish migration from Rondout Reservoir, but wild Brown trout is abundant below. Important spawning stream for reservoir fish. A prize for New York City acquisition.
H139-35-4	W. Br. Vernooy Kill	Brook and brown trout
H139-35-4-1	Unnamed	
H139-35-4-2	Unnamed	
H139-35-5b	Unnamed	

West Shokan Quadrangle

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Description/Remarks</u>
H139-14-20-7	Mettacahonts Creek	Brown trout. Barrier falls and dam below unit.
H139-14-20-7-6	Unnamed trib.	
H139-14-20-2	Sapbush Creek	
H171-P848-5	Bushkill	Brown and rainbow trout. Important stream for spawning fish from Ashokan Reservoir. Has a following of anglers, fishing clubs and camps. Highly publicized stream disturbance where bulldozers were used to try and reroute the stream in its lower reaches.
H171-P848-5-2	Maltby Hollow Brook	Brook, brown and rainbow trout. Excellent small stream fishing.

West Shokan Quadrangle Continued

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Description/Remarks</u>
H171-P848-5-4	Mine Hollow Brook	Brook, brown and rainbow trout. Excellent small stream fishing.
H171-P848-5-6	Kanape Brook	Brook, brown and rainbow trout. Excellent small stream fishing.

Unique aspects of this area include the Atlantic salmon run in the West Branch Neversink River. This is the only run of its kind within the region.

3. Wildlife

This unit is located within the Catskill Peaks and Neversink Highlands ecological zones and the wildlife which occur here are similar to those found in other areas of mature northern hardwood forest in southeastern New York State. The northern hardwood forest favors late successional species such as black bear, porcupine, gray squirrel, snowshoe hare and wild turkey. Species that use earlier successional stages, such as white-tailed deer, cottontail rabbit and ruffed grouse occur at lower populations here than in nearby areas of lower elevation, flatter terrain, and more diverse vegetation.

Deer were more numerous than sheep in the 1800's (as they are again), and moose were often shot. Peter C. Hall made a skin from a moose killed six miles above Claryville (Quinlan, 1873). Wolves were also very common in the area. In 1701, New York State Law permitted the County to award nine shillings to "whatsoever Christian shall kill a grown wolf" (Purcell, 1978). As late as 1841, a man named Richard C. Dewitt found a den with six wolf cubs which he turned in for a bounty of seventy-five dollars (Quinlan 1873).

Today, this area is part of Deer Management Unit (DMU) 55, with another 20 percent in DMU 24. Deer populations are probably at or slightly below the carrying capacity. Deer density can be a factor in the failure of forest regeneration. In some areas high deer densities can inhibit intermediate canopy vegetation. Winter habitat, especially in Deer Management Unit 55, is one of the more critical factors in determining population size. Deer winter concentration areas are usually found on southern or southeastern facing slopes. Quality of current winter habitat is considered fair to poor. For more information refer to Wildlife Management (Chapter IV).

The area is the southeastern edge of the more northern of the Catskill bear populations. Overall about 450 bears are found in this 1200 square mile region. All of the Sundown Wild Forest is good bear habitat. Male bears have a Catskill home range of about 25 square miles, females about 15. The area contains many potential den sites, 75 percent occurring in rock formations at about 2300 to 2900 feet in elevation on north facing slopes.

Fisher (*Martes pennanti*) were reintroduced into the area in the late 1970's and are now firmly established. Fisher is the only species which actively hunts porcupines. This area is also home to 13 other species of furbearers among them beaver (See Appendix B). Wildlife Management Unit 11 presently has a beaver occupancy objective of 0.30 (30 out of 100 potential habitat sites are occupied by beaver). This occupancy rate translates into approximately 0.3 active beaver colonies per square mile, or approximately 35-40 active colonies within the Sundown Wild Forest. The average size of beaver pond within this area is approximately two to four acres. Beaver alter habitat by damming streams and flooding wooded areas. The trees are cut down by the beaver or die from the flooding. As the food supply diminishes, the beaver leave, the dam breaks up, and the habitat becomes a meadow. Over time, succession continues with brush and saplings and eventually mature forest returns if the beaver don't reinhabit the location.

Beaver impoundments are used by a large number of other species. A study conducted in central New York found that over 100 species of birds use beaver impoundments in the spring (Grover, 1993). Beaver altered habitat is also important for river otter, mink, muskrat, frogs, salamanders, turtles and most other animals that live in the forest.

Coyotes (*Canis latrans*) started returning to the area in the 1950's and by the 1970's were firmly established. Their home range is 10-15 square miles per family unit (adult pair with four to five young). The Sundown Unit could contain between three and four families. Coyotes were here originally, but disappeared because their habitat changed as forests were cleared for farming. Hunting played a secondary role in their disappearance. Today, their howling can add to the wild forest experience.

With the exception of the "Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State" (Andrle and Carroll, 1988), a formal inventory of animal life has not been undertaken in recent years. However, in "Integrating Timber and Wildlife Management" (1983), Chambers compiled an extensive listing of wildlife presumed to be in this ecological subzone. Based on his work, 22 species of amphibians, 19 species of reptiles and 51 species of mammals possibly reside in the Sundown Wild Forest Area. Based on Chambers (1983) and Andrle and Carroll (1988), there are 135 species of birds that may nest in the unit or use the unit during migration.

This unit is habitat for timber rattlesnakes, a threatened species. There are three timber rattlesnake dens on or near the unit. In addition to the den sites, the unit provides foraging habitat for rattlesnakes during the summer.

According to the "Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State (Andrie and Carrol, 1988), the red-shouldered hawk, a threatened species, was confirmed breeding on or near the unit between 1980 and 1985. However, the Natural Heritage Program has no records of the hawks in or near the unit.

Andrie and Carrol (1988) list the bald eagle, an endangered species, as a possible breeder in or near the unit. However, there are no known bald eagle nesting sites in the unit, although there is one nearby. According to Chambers (1983), the peregrine falcon and bog turtle, both endangered species, may reside in the unit. However, there are no known falcon eyries or bog turtle populations in the unit. Peregrine falcons, as well as many other birds, may travel through the area during migrations.

The eastern bluebird, common nighthawk, common raven, Cooper's hawk, vesper and grasshopper sparrows, small footed bat, spotted and wood turtles, eastern hognose snake, Jefferson, blue-spotted and spotted salamanders are all "special concern" species which may reside in this unit. Special concern species are native species that either are vulnerable to becoming endangered or threatened, or their present status in New York is uncertain.

This unit provides nesting habitat for neotropical birds, especially forest interior, area sensitive species including the red-eyed vireo, black-throated blue warbler, black and white warbler, Canada warbler, Louisiana waterthrush, scarlet tanager, and rose-breasted grosbeak. Recent research indicates that these species require large areas (7,500 ± acres) of undisturbed forest for optimal breeding habitat (Robbins et. al., 1989).

4. Geology/Terrain

Some time ago, southeastern New York and New England were dominated by relatively high mountains. To the southwest loomed a shallow sea. The Catskills were nothing more than a large, and slowly sinking, delta formed by gravel, sand and mud spread by rivers draining the high mountains to the east. This sediment accumulated to a depth of several thousand feet before the mountains wore down. Then, some two hundred million years ago, the delta, as well as the surrounding sea bottom of sedimentary rock began to rise. A long period of uplift and erosion followed. The erosion formed today's valleys, leaving the more resistant mountain tops, which is why they are about the same height (Isachsen et al., 1991).

The sandstones and shales which came from the sea bottom were much finer than the delta sediments of today's Catskills. The delta sediments, cemented gravel or conglomerate, were very resistant to erosion. Thus, the Catskills, especially the eastern Catskills where the coarsest of the gravel from the river deltas were deposited, were able to resist the erosion and maintain their elevation. To the west, the finer sediments from the ancient ocean wore down.

The Peekamoose Valley was most certainly within the ancient river delta, as is evidenced by the high elevation of the surrounding mountains and conglomerate rock. The valley itself was formed during the last ice age. J. L. Rich, in his book "Glacial Geology of the Catskills" writes, "a powerful stream working for a long time must have been required to cut a rock gorge so large and deep as Peekamoose gorge." He theorizes that the Esopus Creek was once dammed by a glacier to form a large lake. This lake grew as ice lay banked up against Ashokan High Point, above the level of Wagon Wheel Gap, until the waters found a place to drain through Watson Hollow and Peekamoose. This resulted in the formation of a powerful stream which cut deeply into the erosion resistant conglomerate rock of the mountains. Today, small tributary streams, unable to match the great power of this lake outlet, cascade over the sides of the Peekamoose gorge, forming numerous waterfalls as they join the Rondout Creek. Some of the larger tributaries, such as Stone Cabin Brook (1.1 miles), have cut narrow gorges of their own. Today's Rondout Creek descends about 300 feet over approximately four miles before making its way to Sundown.

Rich (1934) explains:

"As the ice banked against the east side of [Ashokan] High Point melted down, it eventually uncovered a part of the slope lower than Peekamoose gorge [described above]. The outlet of Peekamoose lake was then immediately transferred to this new position where it cut a deep gorge now known as Wagon Wheel gap. The gorge must have been started at an elevation of about 1600 feet, but its present bottom is a talus slope at about 1320 feet, and it is estimated that the rock bottom of the gorge is 1300 feet. This fixes, approximately, the lowest level of the corresponding lake (Shandaken lake) in the Esopus Valley. At the south end of Wagon Wheel gap, large fossil waterfalls and cataract basins are still preserved.

When the stream first started flowing through the gap the ice pushing in from the southeast forced it southwestward past Sampsonville, when it turned southeastward toward Liebhardt and Mombaccus. The channel that it cut at this time is large and distinct... with two fossil waterfalls in the bed of the channel."

The ice margin at this time stretched along the ridge from the Vernooy Kill in Wawarsing to High Point Mountain. On the western side of the unit on the east slope of Denman Mountain, the ice tongue was low and didn't push over the ridge at Red Hill into the Neversink Valley. Instead, it came from the southeast, up the Rondout Valley, an interesting example of the influence of topography on the direction of ice flow (Rich, 1934). The area of the upper Sugarloaf Brook was only lightly influenced by the glaciers and today remains a high plateau.

These rather intense natural forces have produced appealing natural features, including waterfalls, tranquil swimming holes, steep mountain valleys, broad rock terraces and cliffs, and some spectacular views along the ridge from High Point to the Vernooy Kill.

5. Soils

The Arnot-Oquagua-Lackawanna soils are extensive in the mountains (USDA Soil Conservation Service, 1979). In the general soils map of Ulster County these are characterized as moderately well drained, mostly very steep soils, on uplands. In the narrow valleys are found thin wedges of alluvial soils associated with rivers (riparian lands). The Willowemoc-Mongaup-Lewbeach soils in the Sullivan County section of this unit range from nearly level to steep, are pretty well drained, and confined to the uplands of the Catskill Mountains (USDA Soil Conservation Service, 1989) where most of the State lands are located. Public use of wetlands, wooded swamps, poorly drained areas, steep slopes, and lands near open water is discouraged. Where existing trails are eroding or new trails are proposed, they are usually rerouted to avoid such areas; but if this is not possible, they are designed to eliminate erosion.

6. Wetlands

Wetlands are concentrated in the Vernooy Kill Falls section of this unit (see description and map in Chapter IV). Small wetlands associated with stream and river banks are found throughout the unit. A few examples of wider stream associated wetlands or wet meadows are found on the Kanape Brook, Vernooy Kill, and Pepacton Brook (Denman Mountain). There are about 480 acres of State designated wetlands in the Vernooy Kill Falls section of the unit.

7. Watershed

The Forest Preserve lands in this unit abut secondary streams. State preserve lands are concentrated on ridges, with rare exceptions away from valley bottoms. However, the Bush Kill flows into the Ashokan Reservoir by the Kanape (Town of Olive), Sugarloaf Creek (Town of Denning) flows into the Rondout Reservoir, and the East Branch of the Neversink (Town of Denning) flows into the Neversink Reservoir. These reservoirs are part of the New York City drinking water supply.

Forest Preserve lands are managed to maintain, and when possible, improve the water quality of the watersheds, whether part of a reservoir system or not. Soil erosion, containment of stormwater discharge and the use of buffers, careful siting and monitoring of approved campsites near water bodies and stable trailbeds are integral to the management of State lands and recreational facilities, which include parking, trails, camping sites, and privies.

8. Wild Forest

A wild forest is a section of Forest Preserve where the land can sustain a somewhat higher degree of human use than in a wilderness area. It may contain areas of land or water that are essentially wilderness in character, where fragile natural resources require wilderness management. Often, these areas are located at higher elevations, and near streams or wetlands, and can be adequately provided for by careful planning. A wild forest has also been defined by the Catskill State Land Master Plan (1985) as an area which lacks the sense of remoteness of wilderness areas which permits a wider variety of outdoor recreation. Although there are large wilderness-like areas within this unit, many roads, adjacent private lands and a history of intensive land use (see history) lead to the decision to manage this land as a wild forest (NYS DEC, 1985). To this day, the land retains noticeable and substantial imprints of human works.

B. Man-Made Facilities

1. Roads

a. Public Roads

- 1) Ulster County Route 42 forms the boundary of this unit along the Watson Hollow (Peekamoose) Road bordering the Kanape (Town of Olive) for 1.4 miles.
- 2) Browns Road (adjoining Krumville Plantation), Town of Olive - 0.56 miles.
- 3) Upper Cherrytown Road (Town of Rochester) for 0.86 miles.
- 4) Mill Road (Town of Rochester). Three locations for a total 1.16 - mile stretch.
- 5) Holly Road (Yagerville, Town of Rochester) - 0.38 miles.
- 6) Dymond Road (Greenville, Town of Denning) - 0.50 miles.

- 7) Spencer Road (connecting Dymond and Sundown - Greenville Roads) - 0.40 miles.
- 8) The Sundown - Greenville Road (Ulster County Route 101) passes though the unit at two locations (Town of Denning) - 1.06 miles.
- 9) Sugarloaf Road, Town of Denning, two segments - 0.93 miles.
- 10) Red Hill Knolls Road, Town of Denning, 0.49 miles.
- 11) Denning Road, Town of Denning, through Neversink River parcel - 0.21 miles.
- 12) Furmans and Glade Hill Road, Town of Neversink - 0.31 miles.
- 13) Moore Hill Road, Town of Neversink, year-round - 0.60 miles; seasonal - 1.78 miles.
- 14) Denman Mountain Road, Town of Neversink, seasonal, two sections - 0.46 miles.
- 15) Glade Hill Road, Town of Denning (continuation of seasonal Moore Hill Road) - 0.30 miles.
- 16) Frank Donovan Road (Neversink) - through private and through State land to inholding from road - .42 miles.
- 17) Ridge Road, Yagerville, Town of Rochester, to inholding (0.18 miles):

b. Unmaintained Town Roads

- 1) Spencer Road in Town of Denning is called Trails End Road and Mountain Road in Town of Rochester, through State land - 4.3 miles.
- 2) Van Aken Road, Town of Denning - 1.61 miles through State land.
- 3) Balace Road, Town of Denning (public access to State land preserved).
- 4) Bear Spring Road, Town of Rochester, through State land to inholding - 0.9 miles.
- 5) Van Aiken Knolls Road (a/k/a Mike Combs Road), Town of Denning (through State land only) - 0.25 miles.

- 6) William O'Coon Road, a/k/a Stone Cabin Brook Road (south, off Porcupine) through State land to inholding - 0.93 miles.
- 7) Dinch Road (north, abutting Red Hill), Town of Denning - 0.85 miles.
- 8) Wildcat Road R.O.W. through State land, Town of Denning - 0.50 miles (formerly a town road).

c. Other

- 1) Mancuso Road, Town of Wawarsing - 1.39 miles to State land (about .49 mile on State land still visible).
- 2) South Hollow Road, Town of Olive - to State land
- 3) Bungalow Brook Road, Town of Neversink, to State land - 0.33 miles on State land accessing 0.18 mile stretch of private land, then crossing State land to Denman Mountain Hunting Club and other inholdings.
- 4) Lackawack Hill Road, Town of Wawarsing - 0.04 miles on State land.
- 5) Krumville Plantation access, Town of Olive, off Browns Road through State land - 0.16 mile.
- 6) Haver Road, Town of Olive, access to and into State land.

d. Private Landowner Access Easements Over Forest Preserve Lands.

- 1) Lackawack Hill (East Mountain) easement over State land in favor of adjoining landowner - 0.31 mile.
- 2) An 0.5 - mile private R.O.W. starting at the Vernooy Kill Falls trail parking lot off Cherrytown Road through State land.

TABLE Summary of actions needed on the major easements and access points, in Section e.

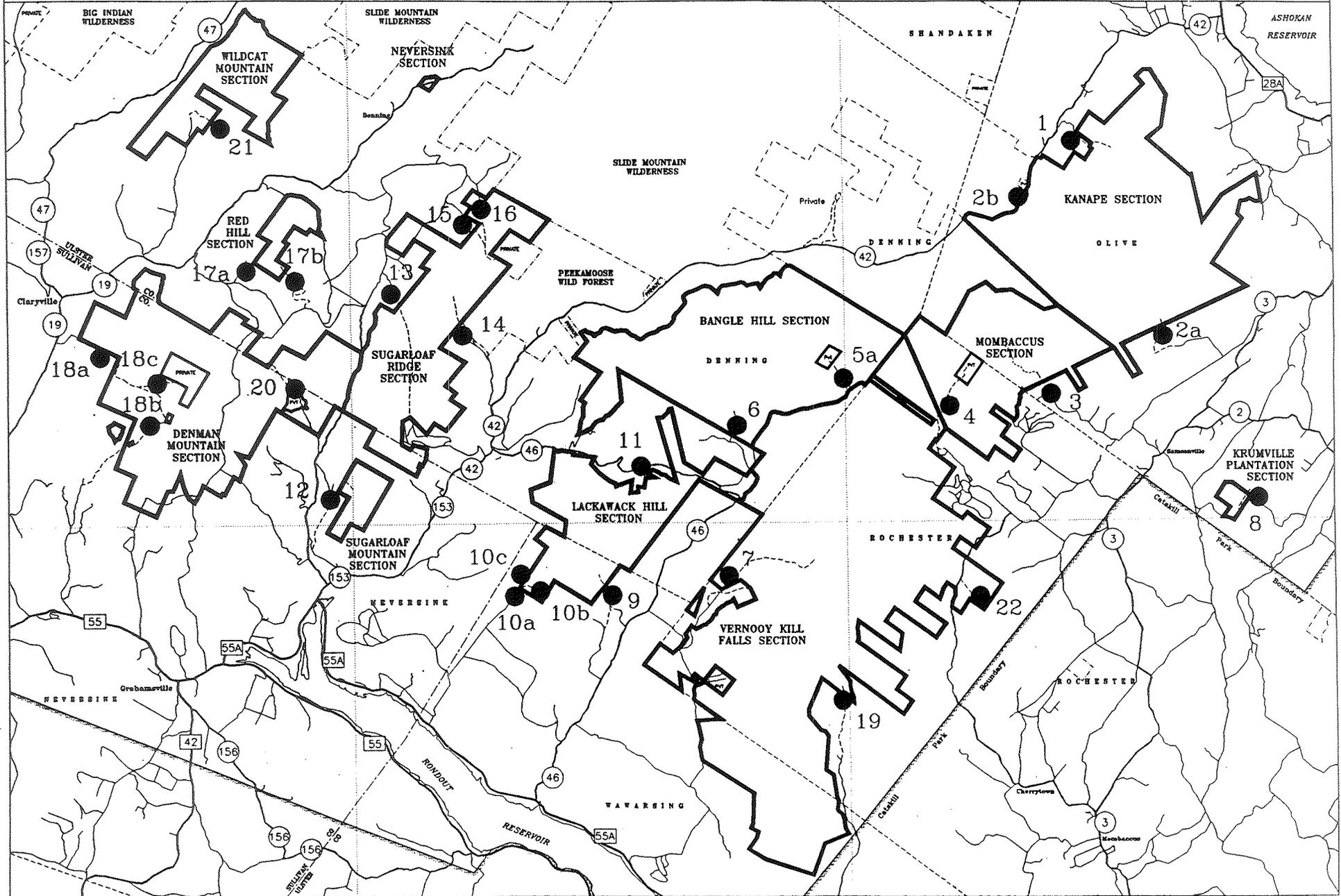
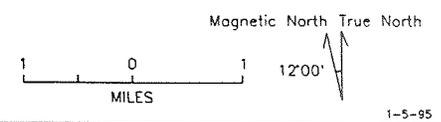
#EASEMENT/ACCESS/ROAD	ACTION NEEDED
1. South Hollow Brook Road, Town of Olive	Conclude research on public and administrative access rights.
4. Bear Spring Road, Town of Rochester	Resolve use by local owner of Trails End Road to access inholding with TRP. Traditional access off Bear Spring Road. Confirm road status.
5. Tarantino Access, Town of Denning	Continue to clarify the use by local owner of unnamed woods road through Forest Preserve by TRP.
5a. 40 Year Occupancy Agreement along Spencer Road, Town of Denning	Monitor two acre site through October 19, 2015 termination date.
7. Holly Road, Town of Rochester	Clarify/administrative/public access rights on this historic crossing to the Vernoooy Kill Falls.
8. Krumville Plantation Access, Town of Olive	Allow landowners to maintain only the original roadway width. Continued use of the more recently built spur if granted, can only be through a TRP for a limited time period under special circumstances. The spur will otherwise be closed.
10b. Lackawack Hill private easement, Town of Neversink/Wawarsing	Monitor condition/use of road and compliance with access easement.
10c. Lackawack Hill Road	Once connected to East Mountain Road. Further research on status needed.
12. Sugarloaf Mountain South Access, Town of Neversink	Confirm exact location and status of access to the property.

#EASEMENT/ACCESS/ROAD	ACTION NEEDED
13. Van Aken Road, Town of Denning	Conclude research into public access to State land from the east and west sides of the Wild Forest. Take a clear position to resolve the issue, even if a decision is made not to use the access in this UMP.
15, 16. Van Aiken Knolls Road a/k/a Mike Combs Road) and Stone Cabin Road (off Porcupine Hill)	Clarify road rights and access rights to confirm DEC intent to close Van Aiken Knolls Road on State land.
17. Easement to Red Hill Fire Tower, Town of Neversink	Easement will cease if fire tower removed. Easement runs along private lot boundary.
18. Bungalow Brook Road, Town of Neversink	Clarify status of road to and through State land on Denman Mountain. Monitor use of road by four inholdings.
20. Frank Donovan Road, Town of Neversink	Clarify access rights to State lands beyond inholding.
21. Wild Cat Road, Town of Denning	Current use of woods road by hunting club off Wild Cat Road is not deeded right-of-way. Continued use of this road for auto access requires a TRP for limited time under special circumstances.
22. Old Vernoooy Road, Town of Rochester	Monitor use of private easement consistent with Forest Preserve requirements.

UTILITY EASEMENTS	STATUS/ACTION NEEDED
1. Denman Mt. Road, Town of Neversink	All lines must be within the limits of the public highway. No cutting of trees outside of highway right-of-way and trimming minimized.
2. Sugarloaf Road, Town of Denning, Dymond Road	New or additional occupancy of Forest Preserve lands not permitted. Cable facilities and poles not within highway right-of-ways are contrary to Article XIV of the New York State Constitution and must be removed.
3. Watson Hollow Road (County Rte. 42), Town of Olive	Cable facilities and poles not within highway right-of-ways are contrary to Article XIV of the New York State Constitution and must be removed.

SUNDOWN WILD FOREST

Major Easements & Access Points



e. Major Easements and Access Points further described.

Below is a list of access locations and a brief description of major issues. The locations are keyed to the map on the preceding page. The information presented for these 22 locations is a starting point. Some of the research is detailed while some is still in progress (See TABLE on preceding pages). New information from adjacent and affected landowners and Town records is always welcome. We will work with affected landowners to arrive at a clear position on the status of each access location. The information is invaluable for consistent and meaningful planning on the public lands we are responsible for. The same benefits come to private landowners. The vague and confusing situations which exist today lead to trespass and ill will, not good neighbors.

Great concern and apprehension was expressed by many persons at the three public meetings and in the letters we received about the DEC's plans (Please refer to Comment/Response #4 and 7 in Appendix A). In all of the 22 cases discussed below and in any that may come up in the future, the **DEC WILL NOT AND CONSTITUTIONALLY, CANNOT, SUPERSEDE PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS WITHOUT THE EXISTENCE OF A LEGAL RIGHT-OF-WAY, EASEMENT, OR TITLE. OUR PURPOSE IS TO MAKE STATE LAND MANAGEMENT DECISIONS BASED ON FACTUAL INFORMATION, WORKING WITH LOCALLY AFFECTED LANDOWNERS.**

1) South Hollow Brook Road; Town of Olive

According to the Olive Highway Superintendent, this road is currently maintained to the last house. The superintendent indicates that it is the Town's position that, similar to Freeman Avery Road, there is no public access to State land here. Further, he feels the owner of the property abutting State land through which the road runs, could block off the road.

The road is currently used by hunters and mostly local residents, who camp at several sites along South Hollow Brook. (Three sites are significant.) The road continues roughly to the source of the brook and deteriorates as it climbs further up the mountain ridge to the north.

- DEC must confirm/clarify public access rights, administrative rights, etc.
- Once its status is clear, DEC will consider alternatives (see Section V) to provide limited public access and parking, and provide signage and camping policy guidance. If necessary, limited purchase of access easements or parking for public use.

2a) Freeman Avery Road; Town of Olive

Based on research done on November 21, 1990 by DEC staff, it was concluded that use of the road is limited to administrative access only:

"In conclusion it was found that the "Kanape Road" was laid out as a town road by the Commissioners of Highways of the Town of Olive in the Year 1835, and that the said road was not found to have been filed as being abandoned with said town. The affidavit signed by David Smith dated November 29, 1920 states that "...no roads or lanes are used by adjoining owners or by the general public....". This affidavit predates States ownership of the "Noah Barringer Lot" through which the said "Kanape Road" passes through. On N.Y.S.D.E.C. Map No. 3040 the "Kanape Road" is shown as a truck trail, which was maintained as a fire truck trail by this department until the 1960's. Therefor it appears that the State of New York would only have an administrative access based upon the fact that the "Kanape Road" was laid as a Town Road and that when it was abandoned from nonuse, the public lost the right to travel along such road, but that each individual owner will maintain his right to travel over such road and this right passed to the State of New York when the lands were purchased on which this road previously served."

The road is currently blocked by blowdowns, etc.; however, administrative access, including forest fire control, continues.

3) Haver Road; Town of Olive

The State has public access rights from the end of the Town maintained portion of Haver Road:

"The State has the right for public access based upon a certain deed between Edgar Palen and Ellen K. Palen to Polle Abramowitz and Richard Oleck filed in the Ulster County Clerks Office in Liber 512 Cp. 39, dated July 4, 1925, and recorded on July 24, 1925. Said deed states "...Excepting and reserving unto John Beesmer, his heirs and assigns, a right of way over a portion of the premises above described as the same is now used and enjoyed by said John Beesmer....". The above stated right of way leads to the parcel of land that the State purchased from John Beesmer by a certain deed filed in the Ulster County Clerk's Office in Liber 516 Cp. 518, dated March 5, 1926 and recorded on April 19, 1926, known as the "Pine Timber Lot." Though there is no actual mention of the above stated right of way the appurtenance clause within the deed covers all rights and interest of the parties of the first part in and to said premises, which gives the State the right to use said road as public access."

4) Bear Spring Road; Town of Rochester

This road, a dirt woods road, leads to what is known as the "Rose" Lot on the town line with Olive (Map No. 9003, Project Q-CFP Ulster 113, Proposal No. 1788 - Samuels).

- From Liber 1110, Pg. 1068, Jacob Gray to Earl Edgar (1961), public access to State land is assured anywhere along this road. The owners of the 'Rose' Lot, an inholding here, retain a right-of-access on Bear Spring Road. In Liber 1059, Page 425 (1959), Gray gave himself access from the public road to the upper part of the lot when he sold the lower portion. In Liber 1110, Page 1068 (1961), Jacob Gray reserved to himself, his heirs and assigns, the adjoining lot owners, and the public at large a right-of-way in both directions across the small lots which are now owned by the State. To the west of the road, the right-of-way, presently not used, is the only identified viable access to the Gray lot inholding. The right of way to the east of Bear Spring Road could also be used by landowners there. The right of way is defined as: " a strip of land 50 feet in width for the public road which is proposed to cross the northerly portion of the property herein described, for all purposes of ingress and regress over and through the premises herein conveyed as and for a public road."
- According to an assessment done for DEC purchase of the Edgar Property (final purchase in 1989) the road is not a town road.
- A temporary revocable permit (TRP), limiting the use of the driveway from Trails End Road - Spencer Road to a specific two week period in the spring or fall, will be required consistent with Department policy elsewhere. During this mutually agreed upon period, car access, including restocking of provisions to the cabin, will be allowed. Otherwise, the deeded access must be used.

5a) Tarantino Access; Town of Denning

No legal R.O.W. was identified to allow the operation of motor vehicles through Forest Preserve lands to reach the Tarantino (formerly O'Reilly) cabin from Spencer - Trails End Road. The Tarantinos have been given the option, pursuant to Department Policy, to apply for a Temporary Revocable Permit to use the existing roadway for a period not to exceed two weeks (letter - Judith Ferry to Richard and Deborah Tarantino, August 10, 1993). The State retains the right of administrative access through this inholding.

No known right-of-way was found by Daniel Dunham, DEC staff, (July 13, 1987), and later in a review of the existing roadway by the Bureau of Real Property. No deeded access can be found through Lots 5 and 4, and although a deeded access was alluded to through Lots 9, 10, and 11 for Lot 8, no access was found through Lot 12.

- 5b) Lot 12 was sold to the State on October 29, 1975 (Hoar & Murray to New York State, Liber 1285, Pg. 300 - Q-CFP Ulster 101.3). A 2.0 acre, 40 year, occupancy agreement exists on the property until October 19, 2015 for the existing camp:

"EXCEPTING AND RESERVING, however, to the party of the first part, their heirs or assigns, the right to use and occupy, for a period of forty (40) years from the date of title transfer, the existing camp and approximately two (2) acres of land fronting on the northerly side of the road which crosses the extreme southerly corner of the above described premises. Together with any and all existing rights of ingress and egress along said above mentioned road, for the purpose of reaching said parcel."

The "use" so reserved shall specifically include the right of the sellers, their heirs or assigns, to make major improvements to the existing camp, or, at their discretion, to raze same and construct or reconstruct one improvement of similar or better construction. The sellers, their heirs or assigns shall further have the option of removing the above mentioned improvements from the two acre use reservation, at any time prior to the termination of the above referred to forty year use period.

Any and all improvements which remain upon the "use parcel," on the termination date of the use period, shall be and become the property of the State of New York with no further compensation."

- 6) Van Aken Access; Town of Denning (off Dymond Road)

This woods road provides what appears to be public access to State lands (L 1307, Pg. 720) without any significant limitations:

"AND ALSO THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND, situate, lying and being in the said Town of Denning, being one quarter of the Lot of land purchased by Sylvester Bartholmew of Pratt and Samson of Gulian C. Verplank and known as subdivision one of the same lot as No. 16. Containing twenty-five acres more or less. Excepting and reserving a road on the south side, being the south and west corner of the said lot and situate as aforesaid.

TOGETHER with the right and privilege of all times hereafter and for all purposes to use the road known as the road leading to the Dean lot for the purpose of ingress and egress which said road is located wholly or partly upon the premises of the party of the first part and leads to and from the above described premises."

7) Holly Road; Town of Rochester (Yagerville)

From 1875 Beers and Co. maps, it appears that the road leading through Yagerville, known as Holly Road (which now does not continue past the "Humphrey Farm"), at one time connected with the woods road on State land (near the corner). State land at this location is perhaps 600 feet or so from the current end of Holly Road (which once led along or through a revegetating field) and less than 100 feet from a recently created subdivision road called "Blueberry Hill Road." Holly Road was once the main road connecting this area and the Vernoooy Falls Mill/Pottersville/etc. (Beers, 1875 and others). The State retains at least administrative access to the State lands at this point. The woods road is in good condition and except for minor blowdowns can be driven for 1-2 miles. It appears to be lightly used by hunters and has been cleared of smaller obstructions.

8) Private Access Trough Krumville Plantation (Off Browns Road); Town of Olive

A woods road runs through the parcel in the northeast corner connecting Browns Road with three cabins/houses on adjacent lands. Although part of the road was once an access to the property's former farmhouse, it now continues northerly to the three other houses. The use of State lands to access private lands by automobile needs clarification (Project is John Vandemark Lot, Map #3540; 1949).

Captain Wood, of the Forest Rangers, New Paltz, and file correspondence indicates that in the 1950's a logging operator illegally added a new road spur to the existing road and was fined. However, since the new road was less steep and in better shape than the old, a temporary revocable permit (TRP) was issued for the limited duration of the logging operation. Subsequently, it appears the adjacent owners kept using the road. The situation was again researched in the late 1970's when a large truck was needed by an adjacent landowner for construction, and a TRP to clear/widen the new road was requested. Application to construct a new road, as well as the widening of the existing road, was denied. This research concluded that abutting landowners seem to have rights over the old road, although not over the newer section now being used. Therefore, the landowners using this road can maintain and repair the original roadway at the width indicated on the 1949 map (less than 15 feet wide). The road may not be widened. The use of the new spur, if granted through a temporary revocable permit, will be for a limited time period under special circumstances. This spur will be blocked off with a gate.

Additional research is needed. The Department is not authorized to grant access rights to undeveloped properties farther to the north, unless clearly deeded in the past.

9) Mancuso Road; Town of Wawarsing

When the State bought the strip of land known as the Kosser Lot along upper Mancuso Road, it guaranteed public access. At that time we leveled a parking pulloff along the road and posted signs "Parking" and "No Motorized Vehicles Beyond This Point". (These need to be replaced.) Road is in poor condition up the last steep ridge and should be improved. It is a dirt road which can only be used by four wheel drive vehicles. Mancuso Road has since been abandoned by the town before it reaches State land. However, public right of access to State land is firmly established at this location.

10a) Lackawack Road; Town of Wawarsing

Reverse side of Mancuso Road. (Southwesterly access to Lackawack Hill). Public has right of access to State land (Liber 1474, Page 652, Ulster County portion of Lots 575, 576, Great Lot 5).

"ALL THAT CERTAIN PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND situate, lying and being in the Town of Wawarsing, County of Ulster and State of New York, forming a portion of Lots 575 & 576, Great Lot 5, Hardenburgh Patent, and is more particularly bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at a pile of stones at the southeast corner of lands formerly of Cornelius Osterhoudt and runs thence along said lot, N. 47° E. 11 chains and 65 links to the center of the Public Road; thence along said road the following nine (9) courses and distances: (1) S. 30° E. 7.00 chains; (2) S. 41° E. 8.00 chains; (3) S. 40° E. 4.00 chains; (4) S. 30° E. 6.00 chains; (5) S. 15° E. 5.00 chains; (6) S. 6° E. 2.00 chains; (7) S. 12° E. 3.00 chains; (8) S. 24° E. 4.00 chains; and (9) S. 30° E. 1.57 chains to lands now or formerly owned by Robinson Hill; thence S. 47° W. about 9.00 chains to a pile of stones on a ledge of rocks; thence N. 16° W. about 21.00 chains to a pile of stones; thence N. 49° W. 21.75 chains to the place of beginning."

10b) Lackawack Hill (Private Easements) (Liber 975, Page 82; Ulster County:

"ALSO A RIGHT OF WAY, in the Town of Wawarsing, Ulster County, New York, across premises formerly of Rufus Brooks and one rod wide the following line being the center of the road:

BEGINNING at the road running across the premises of the said party of the first part and now districted and numbered 117 about 4 rods north of his south line and runs 11.70 degrees E. 1 chain, thence S. 72 degrees E. 2 chains; thence S. 84 degrees E. 3 chains and 50 links; thence S. 59 degrees E. 1 chain 50 links; thence S. 47 degrees E. 3 chains; thence S. 60 degrees E. 1 chain 50 links; thence S. 61 degrees E. 2 chains 15 links; thence S. 74 degrees E. 1 chain 55 links; thence S. 56 degrees E. 3 chains 8 links; thence S. 42 degrees E. 2 chains 8 links; thence S. 54 degrees 2 chains 54 links to the lands of John Amthor. Now the intention of this instrument is not to convey away the title of the land, but to grant a privilege to the said party of the second part, him, his heirs or assigns forever to work upon, travel over or use in any way in which any public highway is used. It is also further agreed that there shall not be more than three gates made and kept in repair by the party of the second part."

Traverse of R.O.W. originally granted Aug, 1861 (Bk 233, Page 493).

10c) Lackawack Hill Road, Town of Neversink/Wawarsing

Public access on old road. Lackawack Road once connected to East Mountain Road of Route 153 (to the west). A road still comes almost to State land here (to nearby private lands). However, this access, if it exists, will probably never be needed. Its status will be researched.

11a) East Branch Rondout Creek

(Q-CFP - Ulster 216, Town of Denning, Great Lot 6, Regional File 3-096.)

The People of the State of New York do not have access over the intervening lands connecting State lands to the east branch of Rondout Creek. In this area, the only access is over lands owned outright by the State. There are no plans to develop additional access in this area. The area in the vicinity of the Kosser Lot (Q-CFP Ulster 216) has no access based on October 24, 1986 letter/findings of J. Doherty, Associate Attorney, Dept. of Law to James West, Real Property Services; as follows:

"Since that was so, and the fact that the abstract of title revealed no express provision for access, I had Mr. Dunham run title back to the common owners of the various tracts looking for express provision for such access, but none was found.

Since it is almost impossible to have a truly "landlocked" parcel, we sought to establish access on a theory of necessity. The attached "Proof of Access" found such access.

However, since the State is already the owner of abutting parcels to the east and west, which each have frontage on a legally opened highway, Sundown Road, the necessity aspect of the access easement is removed, and therefore, under the rule of strict necessity adhered to by New York courts, the access over intervening lands of others is extinguished and terminated. All of Ulster 216 must from the date of vesting find its access over other State lands to the east and/or west."

A grant of access from Kanegis and Williams was drafted at the recommendation of the Law Department in an attempt to clarify access problems during acquisition, and is excerpted below:

"If David Kanegis and his coowner sign the grant of access right of way transmitted under Law Department letter of October 6, 1986, and/or Martin J. Williams signs the revised one transmitted under letter of even date (the revision reason being that the existing road is only half on his lands) there will be full general access over one or both existing driveways for all of Ulster 216 (in the case of the Williams grant, when coupled with the existing such express easement created by Liber 1060 of Deeds, page 328)."

However, the Departments Albany Real Property Bureau indicates that these grants were never executed. There is no indication that any attempt was made to approach these adjoiningers.

- 11b) A right-of-way to the State land exists as described below; however, it is usable only for the removal of timber, which is not permitted on Forest Preserve lands. This right is not limited to the 27.13 acres since other State lands adjoin the parcel. Administrative access by Department personnel may be asserted through this deed.

"...the express, record timber removal grant of access in favor of the more northerly northwest 27.13 acres (Parcel C of the deed to Westkill Tumble Weed Ranch, Inc.) as created in Liber 1205 of Deeds, page 367, the deed to Westkill's immediate grantor in 1958. It recites

'TOGETHER with a fifty (50) foot right-of-way and easement for purpose of ingress, egress and regress leading to the premises above described from the Sundown-Greenville Schoolhouse Road, said right-of-way and easement crossing lands belonging to the party of the first part as the log hauling road and skidding area now exists but in no event to be less than fifty (50) feet in width. The aforesaid easement and right-of-way shall be perpetual in nature, shall run with the land, but

shall be limited to the purpose of removing timber from the premises hereinabove described and which are being conveyed to the party of the second part."

It is the position of the Department of Law (Doherty, 1986) that the right to remove timber, over this right-of-way, carries with it the right to use the expressly granted right-of-way as access for the protection of the timber in the areas of fire, vandalism, illegal cutting, etc., even in the face of "forever wild". Therefore, administrative, as distinguished from public, access should be asserted as to this "woods road". However, not only are these rights limited in the scope of activity allowed, but geographically to the 27.13 acres.

- 12) Access to Property South of Sugarloaf Mountain (East of Sugarloaf Road, Town of Neversink, Sullivan County, acquired May 2, 1930 from Hazel Low and Ada Sheeley and described on Page 472 of the Twentieth Annual Report [1930] of the Conservation Department). This property is made up of the easterly half of Lot 544, the westerly half of Lot 547, about 1/4 of Lot 543 and less than 1/2 of Lot 548.

From Warranty Deed dated December 1, 1884, Recorded 1888, (Book 95, Pg 103), DEC Maps 2184, 2015, it appears that public access should continue to exist to Lots 544, 547, as defined below:

"...The said Abn. B. Low is the owner of the right of way or road over and through Euphratus Smith farm to the bound of the above described farm and he doth agree with all who it may concern that he will not convey nor dispose of his interest in said road and the same shall be the same as a public highway for the public to travel and repair forever."

However, in March 1959, an error was corrected on Forest Preserve Proposal 722, as follows:

"It has recently been revealed, following investigation made by this Department and the Attorney General's office, that an error had been made in the original deed to the People dated May 12, 1930 whereby the whole of said Lot 547 was conveyed, instead of the easterly part of Lot 544 and the westerly part of Lot 547 to which parts of said lots the grantors had title."

To correct this error the Attorney General's office has been successful in obtaining two (2) correction deeds as follows:

1. Hazel M. Low and Ada Cross Sheeley to the State, dated September 30, 1958, recorded in Sullivan County Clerk's Office on February 19, 1959, in Book 576, page 294.
2. Kathleen Barkley Wise to the State dated December 15, 1958, recorded in Sullivan County Clerk's Office on February 19, 1959, in Book 576, page 298."

A correction was made. Map #2184 and 3753, taken in conjunction with a December 1884 Deed between A and P Law and Judson Tompkins, indicates that the access to this State land was through Lots 535 and 544 (E. Smith, Low) and still exists today. A search in county deeds/map located the Euphratus Smith Farm. From this map and deed it appears that the right-of-way is that road shown on the old 1923 U.S.G.S. topographic map extending southwest to northwest just north of Lowes Corners. Administrative, and probably public, access is preserved.

13) (Robert) Van Aken Road, Denning, Ulster County

The Map of Town of Denning shows Van Aken Road as a road to be abandoned on July 6, 1956 (from the Robert Van Aken residence to Sugarloaf Mountain). Since the State was the owner of substantial land holdings at the time of the proposed abandonment, the right of public access is retained. The 1956 abandonment never took place.

Van Aken woods road on the Sundown side of the ridge is blocked by a farm gate and field. Necessary steps will be taken to complete the research and clearly identify access rights the public has to this area. The files indicate a history of illegal road closing by the adjacent landowner despite DEC and public objections. The road is still blocked today. A loop woods road for a barn complex has confused the issue further (thus a loop road is for now shown on the map, neither leg of which is open to the public).

On the west side, where Van Aken enters Sugarloaf Road, this woods road has been damaged by an adjacent owner who has repeatedly ditched and dug holes in the roadway, trying to hinder public access. The woods road is a potentially good access to State land and unless new research indicates limitations on public access, should be posted, stabilized and monitored.

- 14) Balace Road (a/k/a Ike Cross Road or Main Moe, a/k/a Red Hill Road along High Falls Brook), Town of Denning, Ulster County (Proposal #654, #345, #457) March 1928 (H.P., Great Lot 6 - Denning Tract).

Driveable to just short of State land (beyond last house becomes too rocky, although old roadway still visible). Road abandonment was proposed on July 6, 1956, but never took place. Since State owned substantial land holdings in 1928, the right of public access along this road is still retained. Lots 32, 41 were bought in 1928 (532/35); Lots 40, 33 (530/558) were bought/recorded April 23, 1928.

- 15) Van Aiken Knolls Road, a/k/a Mike Combs Road, Town of Denning. Runs easterly from Red Hill Knolls Road to intersect with the access road south of Porcupine Road described under 16.

Woods road which once was more substantial. Now looks like a farm road. Two accesses to state land are not needed in this area. Better road is off Porcupine Road (see #16 below).

- 16) Road south off Porcupine (formerly Woodhall) Road, also known historically as Stone Cabin Brook Road, Town of Denning, Ulster County (Lots 43, 42, 32, Hard.P., G. L. 6 - Denning Tract).

These roads (Nos. 15 and 16) are again shown on the proposed Road Abandonment Map of the Town of Denning; dated July 6, 1956 which never took place. The State owned substantial land holdings from April 1928; therefore, the right of public access along the roads is still retained. The road south of Porcupine Road is used as access by Lot 31, which contains a private inholding.

- 17a) Red Hill Fire Tower ROW, Forest Preserve Proposal 631.

Liber 528/254, November 15, 1927 gives State access via R.O.W. to fire tower, but if fire tower is removed, it is extinguished (Jan 93 memo from R. Burgher to Fred Gerty).

"The right of way was specifically conveyed for the purpose of a "trail and telephone line" to the fire tower. It would be my opinion that the use of this right of way must be limited to gain access only to the fire tower and only until such a time that the tower is removed from Red Hill. Upon removal of the fire tower, this right of way will be extinguished. This right of way cannot be used for general access to the State Forest Preserve lands as that would cause a conflict with the wording of the conveying instrument." [Access is limited for the purpose of visiting the fire tower.]

- 17b) Liber 1468/963, June 28, 1982 grants temporary permission for administrative access to the fire tower from Red Hill Road.

"Grantor certifies that he has not given the State of New York written permission to use the Fire Tower Road on said premises and that the State of New York has been using same only by his oral permission on a temporary basis and that this permission can be rescinded at any time. The Grantor further certifies that the Fire Tower Road IS NOT A PUBLIC THOROUGHFARE."

The permission was canceled by the current owner in 1995.

- 18a) Bungalow Brook Road, Town of Neversink, Sullivan County.

The road is indicated on an 1809 map copied in 1932 by Edward West from the office of William George, Liberty, N.Y. (Map #2030). Bungalow Brook Road was, in the 1800's, one of the main access roads to several farms (including Denman, Darling and Westwood). The road is also shown on the Beers Map, a copy of an 1830 map "of the east part of Great Lot No. 5 of the Hardenburgh Patent" (#1822) and a 1932 tracing of part of Great Lot 5, Hardenburgh Patent (1809, DEC Map #2030). Bungalow Road, along its "maintained portion" is referenced as Town Road No. 11. An easement was required in a 1987 subdivision to widen Bungalow Brook Road to 50 feet. The Neversink Highway Department, at a 1984 Planning Board Meeting, stated that it was responsible for the first 0.25 miles of Bungalow Brook Road. Most of the State lands along this road were purchased around 1931-1932. No evidence of formal road abandonment has been found. Therefore, the public retains the right to use the road for access to State lands. State ownership and use by other owners, including inholdings, confirms that public right of access exists.

- 18b) There are two inholdings within Lot 540, [excluded in 1975: 10-1-2 - Reginald Schillinger 628/131 (200 x 200 ft.) and 10-1-3.2 - Clarence & Viola M. Wood 727/732 (200 x 200 ft.)] on Denman Mountain (Project Q-CFP Sullivan 68) and one within Lot 518, each approximately one acre in size [10-1-4, Denman Mt. Hunting Club 200 x 200 ft along northern line]. These are shown as Lots B, C and A respectively on DEC Map #9469. All the inholdings and adjacent two lots, now State owned, have a right-of-way from the Claryville side of Denman Mountain described as follows:

"Said deed recorded in Deed Record 608 at Page 310 also gives a right of way for a road three rods wide to be used for road purposes only. Right of way starts at north west line of lot described in said deed where the old Town Road is located and is to run along said Town Road in a north westerly direction until it crosses the division line of lands of the parties of the first part and the old Leonard Moore Place."

A collapsed old bus cabin is found on the Denman Mt. Hunting Club parcel. A cabin is located on each of the other two parcels whose owners apparently access their lands from the direction of Grahamsville. The State land boundary around the cabins and along Lot 528 (and nearby) should be checked, and if necessary, resurveyed. Tree cutting was observed throughout this area, so intensified patrol and some investigation is recommended to insure the land is protected.

- 18c) The Denman Mt. Sporting Club - originally Beech Mt. Sporting Club in Liber 465, Page 7 for Lot 517 - retains a right of access through State lands to a large inholding containing 122.67 ± acres based on a survey referenced in 1975 (Q-CFP Sullivan 68.1).

19) Lundy Easement

Public right-of-way (not limited to use) from Lundy Road to State land (Proposal 880-897 dated 1931) via a traverse indicated on DEC Map R483. R.O.W. is one chain (66 ft.) in width as shown and described on this map. R.O.W. was deeded as part of lands purchased from Elizabeth H. Day in 1931. The R.O.W. passes through the Vernoy Kill's floodplain and wetlands and is for several hundred feet very wet, even in summer. It begins at a point in the center of Lundy Road about 570 feet south of the bridge over the Vernoy Kill and for 2/3 of its distance follows the old road beyond Potterville which parallels the west side of the Vernoy Kill.

The status and width of Lundy Road must be researched.

Parking is usually allowed off the shoulder of a town road, as long as the car is still within the road R.O.W, unless posted otherwise by the Town. If the ROW is wide enough and parallel parking can be allowed, Forest Preserve access direction signs can be placed in the area. According to DEC legal staff, the easement does not allow for the construction of even a small parking lot.

20) Frank Donovan Road (Town of Neversink), Just East/Northeast of Denman, Off Sugarloaf Road.

Public can access State land along this road, which appears on the proposed 1956 Map of "Roads to be Abandoned" in the Town of Denning, Sullivan County Land Maps and Beers Maps. State ownership (1939) of lands is prior to any attempt at road abandonment which was never completed. The road once connected through State land to Barnes Road. Though the road is not specifically mentioned in the deeds of Proposal 758, the use of the road by the owners of the inholding through State lands indicates the probable existence of right of public access even continuing through the private land to State lands beyond.

21) Wild Cat Road, Town of Denning, Ulster County

Public can access State land along this road which was abandoned after State acquisition at the State land boundary.

Liber 498, Page 223 (Ulster County) references "the easement of a road through said premises (p/o Lots 104,105) for the benefit of owners of adjoining lots. DEC Map No. 3483 (1959) and 2084 (1936), Proposal 1320-A, Liber 173. Page 317, is made subject to having a road made through the lot for the benefit of adjoining landowners (Project 458, October 1922). The road today, the Wildcat Road stretch from Ladleton to State land from the east and from County Route 47 (along the West Branch of the Neversink) south, underwent a qualified abandonment on June 22, 1932. The State owned several properties accessed by this road before that time. The road remains an access for the benefit of adjoining lots, including the Wild Cat Hunting Club. However, the woods road currently used by the Wild Cat Hunting Club to access their cabin is not a deeded right-of-way. The use of the woods spur road for auto access, if granted through a temporary revocable permit, will be for a limited time (two weeks in spring or fall) or under special circumstances.

22) Old Vernoooy Road (East of upper Cherrytown Road)

In 1957, it was determined that most likely this road was formerly a public highway that had been abandoned due to nonuse. The Attorney General's Office issued an opinion that Mr. Jasinski (the owner of the lot east of the State land through which the road passes) would retain a private easement and would have the right to maintain the road in good usable condition after reasonable notice to the State. He would, however have no right to widen the road or cut trees outside of the established path.

A question arose as to whether the current owner can install utility lines along this road where it passes through State land and whether the fact that this road may be an abandoned public highway has a bearing. The Department's position, barring substantial new information, is that Mr. Jasinski does not have the right to mature his access easement through the State lands to include utility purposes, from the fact that there has never been a conveyance for this purpose.

2. Trailheads

- a. Kanape (physically on Slide Mountain Wilderness lands)
- b. Vernoooy Kill Falls at Trails End
- c. Vernoooy Kill Falls at Cherrytown Road

3. Hiking Trails (appr. 11.2 miles)
 - a. Long Path, Upper Cherrytown Road DEC parking lot to Peekamoose Road - approximately 9.2 miles (blue markers). Cherrytown to Vernoooy Falls section is about 1.75 miles. About 2.65 miles of the 9.2 mile Long Path is shared with a horse/snowmobile trail.
 - b. An additional two miles from Vernoooy Kill Falls to Greenville Road, not part of the Long Path, is shared with a snowmobile/horse trail.
4. Horse/Snowmobile Trail (appr. 11.2 miles)
 - a. Upper Cherrytown Road DEC parking lot to Greenville, return via Trails End Road - 11.2 miles. About 4.65 miles is also a hiking trail. Most of the rest is along town roads.
5. Cross Country Ski Trails

None. Cross country skiing is allowed on all trails.
6. Unmarked Trails
 - a. Old Woods Roads (see easements and R.O.W's for more information). Each of these locations has several; Denman Mountain, Wildcat Mountain South, Sugarloaf Ridge, Lackawack Hill-East Mountain, Vernoy Kill Falls area from Yagerville and south of Spencers Road where it passes through State land in Denning, Bangle Hill, Mombaccus, and Kanape. Of the old roads, those on Denman Mountain and at the Kanape are most heavily used. A parking lot provides foot access to the old woods road (fire truck trail) and High Point Mountain at the Kanape.
 - b. Unmarked foot trails which have evolved by sporadic public use were observed on Denman Mountain (south and east slopes), the Vernoooy Kill Falls area, Mombaccus-Little Rocky (from Haver Road old woods road up to the Little Rocky Ridge), and the Kanape (from a point on the old woods road to the summit of High Point Mountain).
7. Department Trail Registers (1)
 - Vernoooy Kill Falls

8. Parking Lots - Forest Preserve Access (formal, with signs)
 - a. Within unit:
 1. Upper Cherrytown Road - six cars. (Informal parking is found at several locations; near campsites by Trout Creek (Yagerville), along Denman Mountain and Moore Hill Roads (Town of Neversink), and Trails End, Town of Rochester).
 - b. In adjacent management units which serve this unit:
 1. Kanape (Watson Hollow, Town of Olive) - six cars.
9. Bridges (3)
 - a. Kanape informal trail (over Bushkill). Double span logs with board deck, railing, good condition.
 - b. Upper Cherrytown to Vernooey Falls Trail, log span, board deck, railing, good condition.
 - c. Vernooey Kill Falls (over Vernooey Kill), Double span logs with board deck, railing, good condition (replaced summer, 1993).
 - d. Several culverts over which vehicles can presently drive, and which are part of formal and informal trails are found at:
 - Vernooey Falls Trail near Trails End Road (1)
 - Kanape informal trail (3)
 - Haver Road (Mombacus-Rose Bone area) (2)
 - Lackawack Hill area (1)
 - [minor culverts not listed]
10. Outhouses (1)
 - a. Neversink Parcel (Town of Denning), deteriorated, scheduled for removal in 1994.
11. Designated Camping Sites (17)
 - a. Kanape Brook and road, Town of Olive - 4 sites
 - b. Bushkill (Watson Hollow Road), Town of Olive - 2
 - c. Mine Hollow (Watson Hollow Road), Town of Olive - 1
 - d. South Hollow Brook and road, Town of Olive - 3 sites
 - e. Trout Creek (near Mill Road), Town of Rochester - 3 sites
 - f. Vernooey Kill Falls and trail, Town of Rochester - 4 sites

(These camping sites are closely monitored and are designated in areas which are within 150 feet of water, a trail, or road. They are provided as a courtesy to the public as long as their use is not detrimental to Forest Preserve natural resources. Camping is permitted elsewhere throughout the Forest Preserve as long as it is more than 150 feet from water, trail or a road and below 3500 feet in elevation.)

12. Vistas: (Existing and to be maintained)

(Major vistas are shown on maps in Section IV, as a star)

- a. From fields on High Point Mountain and Hoopole Mountain south and west through Watson Hollow and toward the Slide Mountain Range. Additional views along woods road west from High Point Mountain toward South Mountain.
- b. From High Point summit to the east, (growing shut, poor).
- c. From end of State land along the ridge northeast of High Point Mountain, of the Ashokan Reservoir and east toward the Shawangunk Mountains (widest view is on adjacent private land).
- d. From Spencers Ledge east, of the High Point to Cherrytown Mountain Range.
- e. From large fire burn site on Cherrytown Mountain
- f. From points near summit of Denman Mountain
- g. From fire tower on Red Hill (360 degree view, only from fire tower)
- h. Limited views of Peekamoose Valley from open fields on State land south of Porcupine Road (Town of Denning), mainly in winter.

13. Springs (2 developed)

One spring box remains along the Kanape woods road built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Another springbox is downhill and west of the Red Hill Fire Tower. Many other undeveloped natural springs are found throughout the unit.

14. Buildings (2)

- a. Observers cabin and storage shed on Red Hill.
- b. Fire tower on Red Hill

- c. Numerous old foundations and stone walls are found throughout the unit. Tallest stone wall is at the Vernooy Kill Falls, probably a remnant of the old mill.
- 15. Signs - Parking lots (1), and trail directional signs.
- 16. Supporting Facilities Outside the Unit
 - a. Peekamoose Valley Wild Forest Primitive Camping - 40 sites (reflects 1995-96 reductions).
 - b. Peekamoose Trailer Field - 6 sites (Pre-existing. Left out of draft - no new sites).
- 17. Exterior boundary lines - 129.05 miles, (see introduction for more details)
- 18. Utility lines and ROW's

A phone line, approximately 3/4 mile long runs up to the Red Hill Fire Tower. Utility lines along roadways are an issue in several parts of this unit. In general, State highway law says roads can be three rods (49.5 feet wide), but an easement or fee right of way must be granted by adjacent landowners. Since the State constitution does not authorize the Department to grant such easements on Forest Preserve lands, new facilities cannot be located in these areas.

Existing utility lines may not be upgraded and alternative locations must be found within the road right-of-ways or on adjacent private land for this purpose. Alternatively, as in the case of Denman Mountain Road, where a permit was granted for installation of electric poles within the bounds of the highway (road) in 1947, but the line was installed off the road and fifty feet into Forest Preserve lands contrary to the permit, relocation must be within the narrow right-of-way of this seasonal road. Otherwise, alternate routes over private land will have to be found.

Along Watson Hollow Road (County Rte 42), Central Hudson utility poles are on preserve lands outside of the road right-of-way on the east (Kanape) side. The Department must be notified of all work done on existing utility poles within these areas.

Utility lines are found along Sugarloaf Road through Forest Preserve lands.

DEC will pursue removal of unauthorized utilities on the Forest Preserve.

C. Cultural Resources

There are no known archaeological resources within the Sundown Wild Forest Area. However, the nature and extent of archaeological resources at any project should always be rechecked before starting construction.

D. Economic Impact

1. Economic Impact of State Land on Adjacent Private Land

Private lands adjacent to the Forest Preserve are usually very desirable. Landowners seeking privacy and solitude feel protected from development. The State lands provide a "backyard" with no maintenance costs or taxes, but afford access to a vast outdoor experience. Real estate prices have generally escalated.

Property taxes which the State pays on Forest Preserve lands to local jurisdictions are an important revenue source to most communities. The undeveloped Forest Preserve lands place low or no demands on many of the services local government provides, especially education, increasing the value of the taxes paid.

The response to comment 1c in Appendix A outlines the process by which state lands are assessed. The process is essentially the same as for private lands. Also, a brief overview of the effects of open space lands on property taxes and the costs of town services is given. Other questions, including those about the effects of large and small lot vacation properties bought at higher than normal local land values affecting taxes and long time residents, are beyond the scope of this Management Plan. However, a researcher looking at these issues may help dispel myths or pinpoint definite impacts, which until now have only been the subject of speculation. State land acquisition in this UMP is conservative and its purposes are clearly explained in Section IV.

Occasionally, trespass, littering and rarely, noise pollution, can occur where hiking trailheads and parking lots are near private holdings. Clear boundary signs and instructions to the public and adequate patrols and public contact through forest rangers and department staff, along with careful designs, can sharply reduce or eliminate any conflicts. Trails and well designed accesses to State land linked to local villages and communities can have a very beneficial economic impact. Trails tied to towns and major tourist travelways reduce impacts on the Forest Preserve by allowing people to use the existing facilities of a town, stores, lodging, campgrounds, and parking.

2. Economic Impact of Adjacent Private Lands on State Lands

Private holdings generally have little economic impact on adjacent State lands. To prevent timber trespass, the encroachment of structures, and motor vehicle trespass, boundary lines must be marked and maintained. Nearby vacation homes and housing developments often increase the danger of fire, while compounding its consequences. Stricter fire suppression, prevention, and monitoring become necessary. Sometimes, costly steps to block off woods roads and parking lots with boulders, post signs, and maintain patrols become necessary. Access to private inholdings, of which there are

several in this unit, requires clear delineation of right-of-way corridors and use limitations to avoid confusion between State managers and landowners and to maintain the integrity of the Forest Preserve. Sometimes, temporary revocable permits (TRP's) are necessary to clarify/allow private use of State land which is compatible with the preserve. Several such instances are found on Trails End Road and the Wildcat South parcel.

E. Public Use

Most people visit Catskill Forest Preserve on weekends and holidays. In the Ulster County part of the Catskills 34,000 people signed trail registers in 1993 and it is estimated that perhaps twice as many use the Forest Preserve each year (See Figure 1, page 48). Average group size was 2.8 persons.

Currently in the Ulster and Sullivan County parts of the Catskill Park, use is concentrated in the Slide Mountain Wilderness. Figure 2 (page 49) compares the average yearly trail use in the Sundown Wild Forest to other Wild Forest and Wilderness areas in the Catskills. The unit is average for this part of the Catskills. Three areas in this part of the Catskills region have more visitors per trail, while three have less. Average yearly trail use is one of the best indicators we have to compare overall visitor pressure on Catskill Forest Preserve lands. Overall visitor pressure is a good indicator of possible damage from overuse and the need to provide facilities to provide for and manage visitors. Overall, about half of the recorded Forest Preserve visits in the Catskills are in Sullivan and Ulster Counties. Throughout the Sundown Wild Forest, camping is most popular in July and August and on major holidays from Memorial Day to Columbus Day, with day use during winter months.

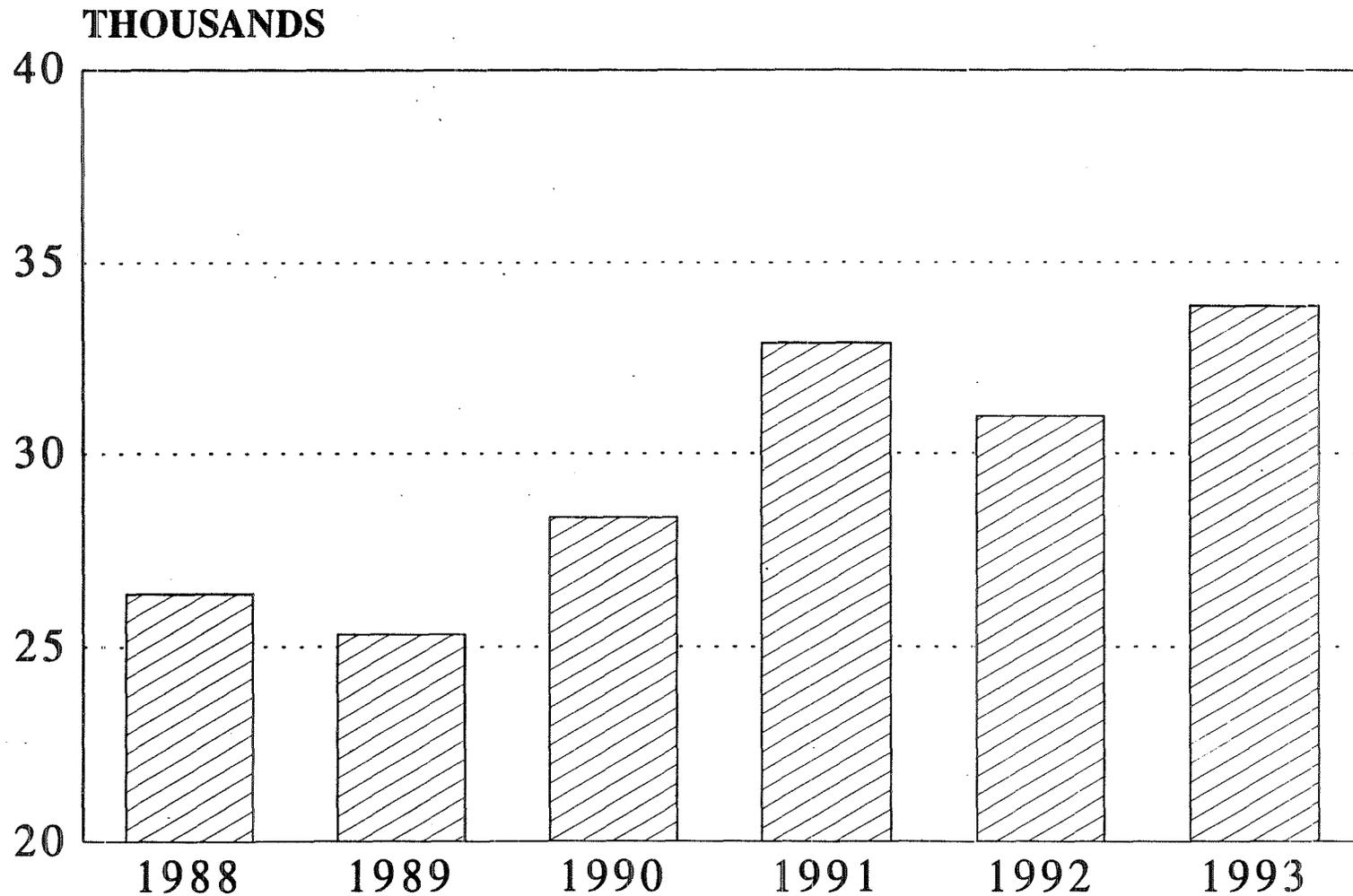
Trail registers provide an estimate of the number of people using an area for future planning and management purposes. However, because use of trail registers is voluntary, a correction factor is necessary to determine actual use. This correction factor, the visitor sign-in rate, is likely to vary from register to register depending on the type of user and the character of the area. Studies have shown sign-in rates vary from as low as 28 percent to as high as 89 percent (Leonard, 1980). For this register, as in similar areas, an average sign-in rate of 50 percent is applied (NYS DEC, 1993).

The only trail register in the Sundown unit is at the Vernoooy Kill Falls. This trail register is on a combination hiking/equestrian/snowmobiling trail, so the use recorded in the winter months (approximately 120) may be higher than on other trails. Assuming a 50 percent sign-in rate, use for this trail over the last four years averages 2320 visitors a year. Trail register entries since 1990 have ranged from a low of 828 in 1991 to a high of 1,892 in 1994.

CATSKILL VISITORS *

REGION 3 CATSKILL FOREST PRESERVE

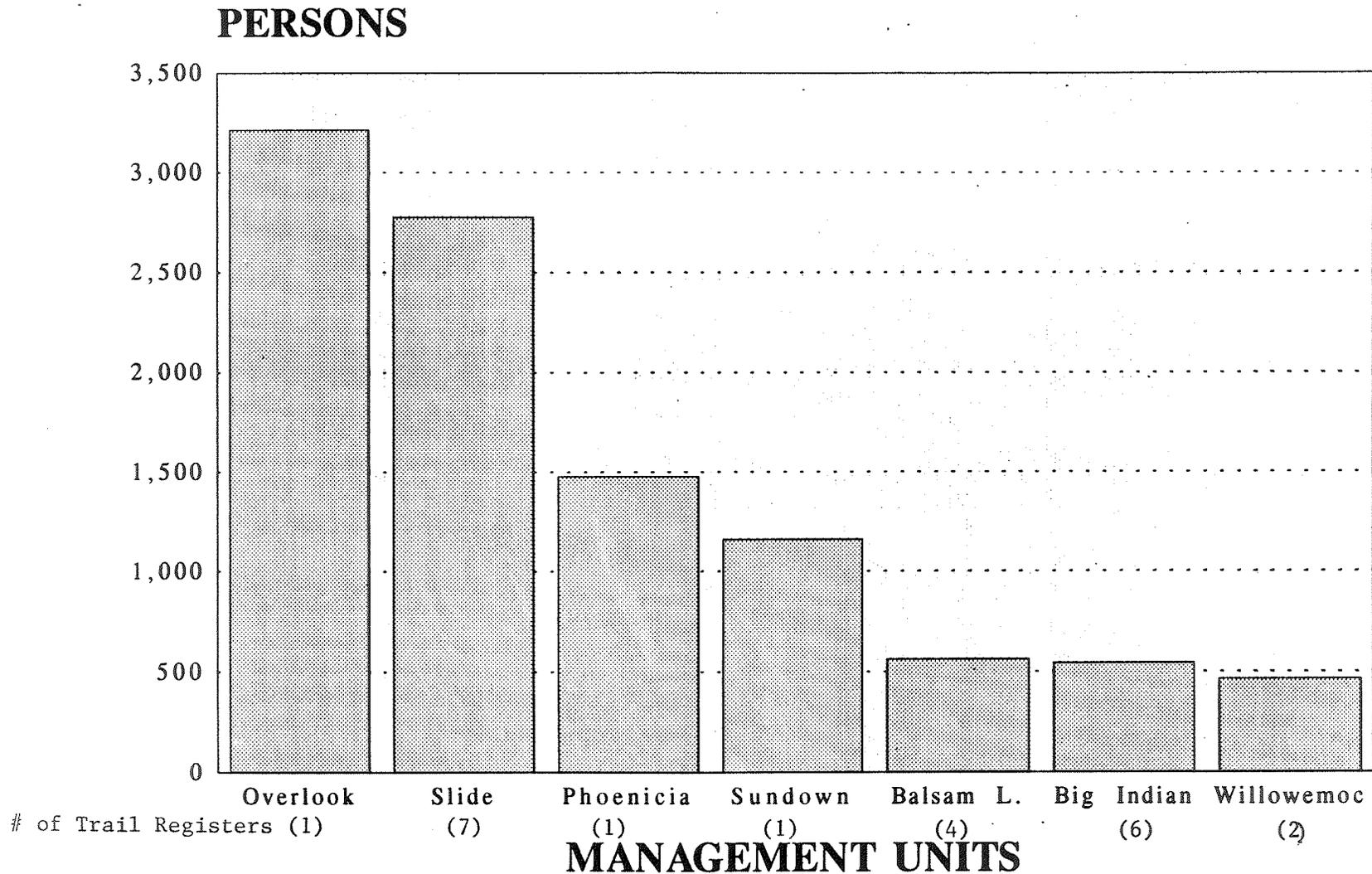
FIGURE 1



48

* For a rough estimate of actual usage, these figures should be doubled

AVERAGE YEARLY TRAIL USE FROM 1990-1993 BY MANAGEMENT UNIT*



Willowemoc in 1990 & 1991 based on 1 register

Small decrease in Balsam Lake in 1992 when lake drawn down for dam repairs

***for a rough estimate of actual usage, these figures, from trail register sign-ins should be doubled**

The Kanape woods road (Town of Olive) to High Point Mountain is popular, primarily in the nonwinter months. During weekends and holidays up to 15 cars are parked in the lot and access driveway at any one time. A wayside exhibit with map, bulletin board, and trail register are proposed for this popular location. Many visitors are from outside of the area.

Denman Mountain receives strong use by local people from the Towns of Neversink and Denning, especially Grahamsville. Unmaintained and seasonally maintained town roads through State land are popular among local snowmobilers when snow conditions permit. Camping and picnicking at Hog Rocks and along Denman Mountain Road have sometimes caused trash problems and scarred the landscape when cars are driven beyond the road edges and clearings.

The use of most of the remainder of the unit, usually by hunters and an occasional hiker, is dispersed. Most users to the Peekamoose Valley Wild Forest Primitive Camping Area stay near the river and campground. Hunters are the primary users of the adjacent Sundown Wild Forest.

A rough estimate of total number of users of the 27,000 acre Sundown Wild Forest, assuming heaviest use in the Vernooey Kill Falls, Kanape, and Denman Mountain areas, and hunter use of roughly 1250-1500 persons, is 7500 visitors/year. With the installation of trail registers along the Kanape Trail and at the proposed Denman Mountain parking lot, more accurate estimates for management purposes will be available.

The construction of a well marked and maintained snowmobile/horse trail on Denman Mountain, as well as new signs, improved parking, and improved trails may disperse use and reduce pressure on the more popular destinations of the region. Equestrian users and snowmobilers use the Vernooey Kill Falls Trail and the proposed Denman Mountain trail at different times. The trails are closed to horses when covered with snow.

Access to the Unit for persons with disabilities is being reviewed with the assistance of the New York State Office of Advocate for Persons with Disabilities, Albany. Access is currently limited, but the following trail systems have or will have potential:

1. Vernooey Kill Falls Snowmobile Trail System, and town woods roads.
2. Proposed Denman Mountain Snowmobile Trail, seasonal Moore Hill Road and town woods roads.
3. Initial 2 miles or so of Kanape Valley Trail.

New opportunities for access by disabled persons will be a priority in the Forest Preserve. Once suitable access is identified or developed, it will be publicized. The opportunities available will be part of already proposed projects and will not require new trail construction. Advocates for the Disabled for Ulster and Sullivan Counties, including Action Toward Independence (Monticello) and the Resource Center for Accessible Living, Inc. (Kingston) will be consulted for appropriate and cost-effective designs.

F. Capacity of the Resource to Withstand Use

The management of this Wild Forest Unit, as for all other lands which make up the Forest Preserve, is aimed to allow public access and recreation to the extent that it does not impair or otherwise significantly damage the resources for which the area is protected by the State constitution.

Please refer to Section II: Inventory, Use, and Capacity of the Resource to Withstand Use and Section III: Management and Policy for more information.

III. MANAGEMENT AND POLICY

A. Past Management

Since 1885, management of Forest Preserve lands within the unit has been guided by the "forever wild" clause (Article XIV) of the New York State Constitution. Management activities have generally centered on fire prevention, fish and wildlife management, and recreation.

In 1975, a Temporary Commission to Study the Catskills recommended the Forest Preserve lands in the Catskills be classified into management units. In 1985 the Department completed a Catskill Park State Land Master Plan which implemented the recommendations of the Temporary Study Commission. The master plan further directed the Department to complete individual management plans which include specific management objectives for each unit.

For more detailed information on the past management of this unit please refer to the History of the Unit and the description of each of the six geographic areas in Chapter IV, Projected Use and Management Proposed.

B. Constraints and Issues

1. Constraints

This unit management plan has been developed within the constraints set forth by Article XIV of the New York State Constitution, Article 9 of the Environmental Conservation Law, Title 6 of the Codes, Rules, and Regulations of the State of New York, the Catskill Park State Land Master Plan and established policies for the administration of Forest Preserve lands developed by the Division of Lands and Forests.

2. Issues

Issues are outlined and directly related to management objectives (see next section) and discussed under each of the six geographically distinct areas in Chapter IV - Projected Use and Management Proposed).

C. Goals and Objectives

1. Goals

First and foremost, the primary goal of Forest Preserve management is to preserve and protect the wild forest character and integrity of the unit, with its natural plant and animal communities, and allow natural processes to proceed essentially unhindered.

Our second goal is to provide opportunities for a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities without degrading the resources or impairing the wild forest setting and the experiences unique to the Region's wild forest lands.

2. Objectives

a. Land Management Objectives

- 1a) **MOTOR VEHICLE TRESPASS.** Maintain boundary lines of the Forest Preserve, with special emphasis along roads and private right-of-ways. Maintain nineteen miles of boundary lines each year on a seven year cycle (129 miles total). This discourages trespass on private lands and encroachment on State lands. Clearly mark all public right-of-ways through private lands with signs informing the public to stay on the roads, to reduce or eliminate public trespass on adjacent private lands.
- 2a) **ACCESS.** Access to the unit is poorly marked and in many areas severely limited. Maintain existing public access roads and discourage the public from leaving established right-of-ways onto adjacent private lands. Provide clearly marked access points and parking facilities with clearly set limits, reducing or eliminating trespass onto State and private lands and unwanted or illegal parking along roads. The public will benefit by being able to find the lands available for their use and learn firsthand of the importance of the Forest Preserve. Fifty-one additional parking spaces are slated for the unit, along with the maintenance and upgrading of thirty-five existing spaces.
- 2b) Clarify and resolve public access when in doubt, whether through easements or old town roads. Further research and legal review will be needed to resolve access issues.
- 3a) **TRAIL MANAGEMENT/MAINTENANCE.** Eliminate incompatible uses which detract from the wild forest character of the unit, such as the illegal use of snowmobiles and motor vehicles. Increase patrols and work with local user groups to self police and educate their members and visitors and curtail the use of unauthorized trails. Signs will be added and informational displays installed

at various points identified in this plan. Maintain existing trails and in some cases monitor, rebuild, or reroute to better, less impacted locations (Bangle Hill, Kanape, and Vernooy)

- 3b) Maintain and construct facilities (snowmobile, equestrian and hiking trails, parking lots, etc.) conforming to DEC specifications and policies to enhance recreational opportunities.
- 4) **FIRE PROTECTION.** Protect the unit from fire as required by Constitutional and legal mandates (Article 9 ECL). Department policy is to extinguish all fires, regardless of cause, land classification or ownership. Fire protection, detection, and suppression is the responsibility of forest rangers. However, review policy at intervals to consider the importance of fire or measures imitating fires in special circumstances where endangered or threatened plant species or communities are identified and would be destroyed by inaction. A candidate for special consideration is the High Point Mountain region of the Town of Olive. Fire could be a useful tool given special, carefully applied and limited circumstances, and thorough public notification. Recognize that although most fires are man caused, the elimination of natural fires which once occurred can cause changes in the native woodland composition.

The validity of fire control from natural causes in a wild forest is questionable. Natural fires, though rare, are a part of the wilderness ecosystem. The difficulty arises in identifying naturally caused fires from set fires. Any changes to current fire management techniques will depend upon the finalizing and implementing of a wilderness fire management policy and the very difficult and complicated task of amending the State constitution. DEC's responsibility for public safety, risk level determination and emergency response is paramount. The Townships of Olive, Shandaken, Rochester, Wawarsing, Neversink and Denning are fire towns.

- 5a) **NATURAL COMMUNITIES.** Protect critical plant and animal habitats (rare plants, rattlesnake areas), archaeological resources and sensitive areas (steep slopes, streamsides) within the unit. Locate any new recreational facilities, such as trails, camping areas, and parking areas to avoid these areas and monitor existing facilities.
- 5b) Eliminate nonconforming, man-made facilities and incompatible uses which detract from the wild forest character of the unit or adversely impact the natural resources. For example, the privy located in the wet area surrounding the channels of the Neversink River on the Neversink parcel, if rebuilt, could degrade water quality.

- 6) **WILDLIFE.** Maintain all native wildlife species at levels compatible with their natural environment.
- 7a) **FISHERY.** Preserve, enhance and where needed, restore fisheries habitats to achieve and perpetuate the historically documented fish communities found in the unit's streams and small ponds. Perpetuate native fish populations in all streams within the unit.
- 7b) Identify future management objectives based upon fisheries investigations of the area.
- 8) **LAND ACQUISITION/EASEMENTS.** Selectively acquire key inholdings, lands contiguous to State land on at least three sides, lands contiguous to State lands containing or used by endangered or threatened species, limited parcels needed for improved access and effective management of public use (reducing nearby private land problems), and places where simplified boundary lines would markedly enhance the management or integrity of State lands. Prioritizing of these lands has been provided in this plan. Any such acquisitions will be governed by the New York State Open Space Plan (NYS DEC, 1992).
- 9) **WATER QUALITY (WATERSHED).** Maintain the water quality of the streams and wetlands by carefully designing, monitoring, and controlling nearby uses and enforcing the 150 foot camping setback.

b. Public Use Management Objectives

- 1a) Monitor the intensity of public use. Take appropriate steps to prevent overuse leading to degradation, such as rebuilding trails to modern standards. If unsuccessful, curtail uses that damage natural resources, whether hiking, snowmobiling, horseback riding or biking.
- 1b) Regulate camping within this unit through 6 NYCRR Part 190, protecting the water quality of streams and rivers. Groups of ten or more may camp by permit only.
- 2a) Educate visitors to use and enjoy the Forest Preserve without adversely affecting its character and natural resources. Provide kiosks (bulletin boards with maps and other interpretive information) in the Grahamsville and Kanape areas, and bulletin boards and signs at other key trailheads and locations.

Improve public recognition and awareness of the Forest Preserve and access. Continue Forest Ranger patrols and initiate Seasonal Assistant Forest Ranger program.

- 2b) Include the unit and its location and highlights on a map, part of a proposed interpretive folder on the Catskill Park. Complement the regional folder with a more detailed folder on the Sundown Unit showing access, trails, key points of interest, appropriate use of the area (camping regulations, etc.) and some historical background.

Provide a limited amount of additional foot, snowmobile, and horse trails in areas which can sustain such uses over the long term (Vernooy Kill, Denman Mountain). Monitor all trail areas and reassess impacts when plan is updated. Control use or eliminate trails if erosion, vandalism, water quality, rare species, and the natural character of the forest lands is imperiled by continued use.

- 2c) Control adverse and illegal uses through enforcement of the Environmental Conservation Law and Department Rules and Regulations. Continue and enhance the Forest Ranger Program to patrol, monitor, and provide public education.
- 3) Maintain hunting, trapping, and other wildlife related recreational activities and provide limited, but clearly marked Forest Preserve access.
- 4) Maintain and improve access to the fishery resources considering the sensitive nature and carrying capacity of riparian lands. Maintain fishery quality.
- 5) Educate landowners and visitors about the benefits of forested lands in watershed management and encourage conservation activities in their lives. Encourage good watershed management.

SUNDOWN WILD FOREST

Major Geographic Areas

- Section boundary
- Kanape, Mombaccus & Krumville Sections (p. 69)
- Vernoooy Kill Falls Section (p. 76)
- Bangle Hill and Lackawack Hill Sections (p. 80)
- Sugarloaf Ridge & Sugarloaf Mt. Sections (p. 85)
- Wildcat Mt., Red Hill, Denman Mt. & Neversink Sections (p. 95)

