NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY | Department of Environmental Conservation

Cedarlands Conservation Easement

Recreation Management Plan

Town of Long Lake, Hamilton County, New York

April 2019

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REVIEW DECLARATION

NYSDEC has responsibility for managing public access and recreation on the Cedarlands Conservation Easement property, in accordance with the content of the conservation easement. The Parties agree that this Recreation Management Plan is consistent with the terms, conditions, and purposes of the conservation easement and approved for implementing the public recreation program on the Cedarlands Conservation Easement.

ACCEPTED BY GRANTEE:
Department of Environmental Conservation, New York

Robert K. Davies, Director
Division of Lands & Forests

4/5/19
Date

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Recreation Management Plan

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I. Introduction

On December 12, 2002, the People of the State of New York, acting through the Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) acquired a conservation easement from Revolutionary Trails Council, Inc., Boy Scouts of America over an approximately 4,865-acre property located in the Town of Long Lake, Hamilton County. The property is known as Cedarlands. The easement limits the use and development of the property and provides certain public recreational opportunities while permitting compatible uses by the landowner.

The conservation easement divides the property into four areas, each of which has different restrictions (see map 2 – Conservation Easement Areas). These areas are the Undevelopable Area (which will be referred to as the McRorie Lake Area), Base Camp Area, Mud Pond Area, and the Long Lake Area (which consist of several parcels owned by private landowners). The easement grants some public recreation rights to the Mud Pond (592 acres) and McRorie Lake (3,309 acres) areas. The Long Lake Area (674 acres) and the Base Camp Area (289 acres) are closed to public use.

A. Use of Conservation Easements

The Legislature of the State of New York has declared the public policy of the State to be the conservation, preservation, and protection of its environmental assets and natural and man-made resources. In addition to purchasing lands on behalf of the People of the State, the Department also protects land and natural resources by acquiring less than full interests in land, using a permanent legal agreement called a conservation easement. Conservation easements are used widely across the United States by government and non-profit land conservation organizations to protect a variety of important natural resources and landscape values such as: water quality, wildlife habitat, sensitive ecosystems, wetlands, riparian areas, scenic areas, agricultural land, working forests, and historic sites. The primary function of easements is to limit or eliminate future development and undesirable land uses on a property, while allowing for continued private ownership and traditional management. Some conservation easements allow public access to the protected property.

There are now more than 900,000 acres in New York that are protected by conservation easements acquired by the State. Most of that land consists of large tracts of commercial timber land in the Adirondack and Tug Hill regions; however, the Department also holds easements on a variety of other properties across the State.

On many large working forest conservation easement properties, the State has acquired some level of public recreation rights in addition to the development and land use restrictions. In some cases, a wide range of public recreational use is permitted, and in others there is only very limited public access. The amount of public access depends largely on the goals and objectives of the landowner at the time the easement was negotiated. These lands are actively managed for forest products, and many of those who own the land also rely on income from private hunting and fishing club leases.

B. Plan Purpose

Public access to conservation easement lands is typically guided by a Recreation Management Plan (RMP), which is focused on the public recreation provisions of an easement. The purpose of the RMP is to identify existing resources on the property, to consider requirements and restrictions of the conservation easement, and to establish the Department's goals and objectives for developing public recreation on the property. While a RMP is not required by the terms of the Cedarlands Easement, developing one allows for the public use of the property to be developed in a process open to public input. Since the purpose of this plan is to address the available public recreation opportunities, the plan focus on those areas open for public use - the Mud Pond and McRorie Lake areas.

II. Property Description and Inventory

A. Property Description

Cedarlands is located in the Town of Long Lake, Hamilton County. Access to the property is from Kickerville Lane, off State Route 30.

The central features of the property are two water bodies, Mud Pond and McRorie Lake (previously known as Rock Pond). There are also two prominent mountains, Rock Pond Mountain and Mud Pond Mountain, on the property. The majority of the property is forested with northern hardwoods and mixed hardwood/softwood forest types.

The majority of the development on the easement property is reserved for private use and is concentrated in the Base Camp Area. Several adjacent landowners gain access to their properties via roads crossing the Cedarlands Tract.

B. Property History

The area of Long Lake near Big Brook was originally occupied in the early 1830s by Joel Plumley. Gradually others, mostly from New England, established a settlement in the area. Thomas S. Walker acquired a large estate encompassing the present-day Cedarlands property and lived in it with his mother and sister until he died in 1929. Upon the death of Mr. Walker's sister Mary, the property was left to Amandus Watts, a family employee.

In 1963, the portion of the original Walker property around Rock Pond (now McRorie Lake) was sold to the Boy Scouts of America, Upper Mohawk Council. The property was operated as a Boy Scout summer camp. New York State acquired a conservation easement over 4,865 acres of the property in December, 2002. Since the Boy Scouts acquired the property there have been several council name changes from different councils combining, with the current council identified as the Leatherstocking Council.

C. Natural Resources

1. Terrain and Soils

Two mountains are located in the northern portion of Cedarlands: Rock Pond Mountain (also known as Walker Mountain) with an elevation of 3,000 feet and Mud Pond Mountain (also known as OA Mountain) with an elevation of 2,372 feet.

The majority of the soils on the property are dark, well drained sandy loams formed in glacial till of the Becket and Berkshire soil association groups.

2. Forest Resources and Vegetation

Active forest management has occurred on Cedarlands since the early 1900s. High grading, the practice of removal of the largest and best timber while leaving the least desirable and diseased timber, was widely employed on the property through the mid-1900s. After the Boy Scouts acquired the property in 1963 through the 1970s, forester-supervised forest management practices were initiated with assistance from the Department. For the 20 years before the easement agreement was signed logging on the property had been reduced.

The easement requires forest management activities follow a written forest management plan, which is to be approved by the Department. In April of 2007 a new forest management plan was developed, which was approved later that year by the Department. This plan identifies the forest types on the property as: northern hardwood, red maple dominated northern hardwood, mixed (primarily softwoods with red maple), and softwoods. Timber harvesting guided by the forest management plan commenced in the fall of 2007.

One plant species of special consideration associated with the property is cloud sedge, *Carex haydenii*. Cloud sedge is globally secure, but in New York it is considered imperiled. In New York there are five known populations and at least eight historic occurrences. On the Cedarlands property an occurrence of cloud sedge was recorded in 1931. Cloud sedge is not confirmed as currently being on the property; however, management actions will be taken with the assumption that it is. Cloud sedge occurs along the edges of lakes and streams, and the margins of wetlands. Areas that may be impacted by recreational use will be investigated for the presence of cloud sedge.

3. Water Bodies and Wetlands

Two water bodies are located on Cedarlands. Mud Pond is 64 acres and has a maximum depth of 22 feet. McRorie Lake is 397 acres and has a maximum depth of 45 feet. Big Brook forms the southern boundary of the property.

A number of streams enter both Mud Pond and McRorie Lake.

There are seven significant wetland areas on Cedarlands. Computer mapping information from the Adirondack Park Agency indicates that there are about 390 acres of wetlands on Cedarlands. Types of wetlands include deciduous and coniferous forested wetlands, shrub wetlands, emergent marsh, and submergent marsh. A significant portion of the shorelines of Mud Pond, McRorie Lake and Big Brook are wetlands.

4. Fisheries

McRorie Lake: a record indicates this water was stocked with brook trout in 1892. In a 1933 survey brook trout and lake trout were both reported but none were caught. Yellow perch, white sucker and pumpkinseed were all present at that time. A dissolved oxygen temperature profile was done during this survey and there was insufficient dissolved oxygen for fish below the thermocline (the deeper cold water layer).

Another survey was completed in 1963 and again brook trout were reported but not caught, and again there was insufficient dissolved oxygen for fish in the deep part of the lake.

In 1985, the Adirondack Lakes Survey Corporation (ALSC) survey found insufficient dissolved oxygen below the thermocline. This lack of oxygen effectively precludes the continued presence of lake trout just as the abundant warm water predators and competitors precludes the presence of brook trout for this water. Yellow perch were quite abundant in the ALSC survey. The survey also caught creek chub, white sucker, brown bullhead, redbreast sunfish, pumpkinseed, and smallmouth and largemouth bass. This lake is a warm water fishery.

Mud Pond: there are no available stocking records for this water. A 1933 survey found that cutlips minnow, blacknose dace, creek chub, brown bullhead, pumpkinseed, were present and that common white sucker, smallmouth bass, and yellow perch were common.

A 1963 survey reported brook trout but none were caught. Insufficient dissolved oxygen for fish was recorded in the deeper water of the pond.

A 1985 ALSC survey caught: cutlips minnow, golden shiner, common shiner, creek chub, white sucker, brown bullhead, redbreast sunfish, pumpkinseed, yellow perch and largemouth bass. White sucker and brown bullhead were the most abundant species. This water is unsuitable as a cold water fishery due to the chemical makeup and species composition of the pond. This pond is a warm water fishery.

5. Wildlife

Wildlife expected to be on the easement property include mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians commonly found in the spruce-fir and northern hardwoods forest types of northern Hamilton County in the central Adirondack Mountains. Two species of note are common loon and pied billed grebe. Common loon is a New York State listed species of special concern. Breeding loons have been documented on McRorie Lake. Recreational use can impact loons, but the recreational development called for in this RMP is not expected to have an impact. There will be limited development of facilities near the lake and public motor boating will not be allowed. Pied-billed grebe is a New York State listed threatened species. In 2002 a pair of grebes were reported adjacent to Cedarlands. This is an area where recreational use is unlikely to cause an impact to the species.

6. Critical Resource Areas

The Adirondack Park Agency Act lists unique geologic features, areas above 2,500 feet in elevation, wetlands, rare plant communities, and the habitats of rare and endangered species as critical resource areas that are especially susceptible to impacts from development activities. Critical resource areas identified within the Cedarlands property include the area of Rock Pond Mountain above the 2,500-foot elevation, wetlands, the habitats of the common loon and pied-billed grebe, and a site where the endangered cloud sedge, *Carex haydenii*, was historically identified.

D. Adjacent Properties

The majority of Cedarlands is bordered by private property. The lands to the east and north are primarily used as seasonal residences. Lands bordering Cedarlands to the west were formerly owned by International Paper Company. These lands are protected by a conservation easement, but they are not open for public use.

To the west of the Mud Pond Area is a 1,800 acre parcel of Forest Preserve land that is part of the Sargent Ponds Wild Forest. This parcel contains Mosquito Pond, the Big Brook Hills, and borders Big Brook. Public access to this parcel is limited because three sides are bordered by private land. The public reach this area on foot by crossing the Mud Pond Area.

E. Existing Facilities Inventory

1. Roads and Trails

Access to Cedarlands is from Kickerville Lane, which enters the property from the south. Kickerville Lane is a town road for about 2 miles from State Route 30, it continues as a privately maintained road for 1.25 miles, and then ends at a three-gate intersection. This is the intersection of Langley Park Road to the east, Base Camp Road to the north, and Fishing Camp Road to the west. Fishing Camp Road, is a logging haul road that goes past Mud Pond and continues to the north end of McRorie Lake. In 2011, the Boy Scouts spent considerable time and money improving Fishing Camp Road. The road was graded, the ditches were cleaned out, and most of the culverts were replaced.

A public parking area is located in a grassy field off of Kickerville Lane. An unimproved road that goes through the parking area provides access to adjacent private property.

The Boy Scouts have built foot trails on the Cedarlands. These trail have not received much use in recent years and are not well maintained. Trails have been built to the summits of Mud Pond Mountain and Rock Pond Mountain. A trail on the east side of McRorie Lake is currently flooded by beaver ponds and is grown in. There is a canoe carry that connects Mud Pond to McRorie Lake.

2. Structures

Mud Pond Area – There is a single-lane bridge over Big Brook. There is a lean-to on Big Brook near the bridge, but this lean-to is not available for public use. A sand and gravel mining area, which is no longer operational and is being reclaimed, is located on the west side of Kickerville Lane about 0.25 miles north of Big Brook.

McRorie Lake Area - There are two lean-tos on the west shore of the lake. One lean-to was built in 2017. The other lean-to was built many years ago and is deteriorating.

3. Campsites

Currently there are two public camping sites on Cedarlands. These are both on the shore of McRorie Lake. One is a large campsite on the north shore. The other is a lean-to on the west shore.

In the Mud Pond Area, the Big Brook Lean-to is used by the Boy Scouts year round and is reserved ahead of time by scout troops. The easement states that when this lean-to is being used by the landowner it may not be used by the public.

4. Signs

Signs have been placed on Cedarlands to help manage public use. The signs include those directing the public to the parking area and to the water access point on Mud Pond. No Parking signs have been posted along Kickerville Lane.

III. Conservation Easement Affirmative Rights

The Cedarlands Conservation Easement grants the State of New York a legal interest in the property, sets forth terms, restrictions, and rights with respect to the property, and establishes a framework for administering public recreation access rights acquired by the State. The specific terms of the easement were developed through negotiations between the State and the Landowner and have resulted in a guaranteed right for the State to permit limited public access to Cedarlands and participation in certain outdoor recreation activities.

All management actions on Cedarlands, as implemented through this RMP, will be conducted in accordance with the easement terms and will consider and strive to be consistent and compatible with, the reserved rights of the Landowner. Permitted public recreational activities, as proposed in this RMP, are designed to have limited impacts on the natural resources and on the Landowner's management of the property.

This section of the RMP lists the terms of the easement that relate to public recreation; this section is not a list of what will be allowed or built on the property. A description of what will actually be developed on the property is in the Proposed Management section of the RMP.

A. Access

The Department has the right to construct and maintain a parking area at a specified location. The parking area may not be larger than 3/4 acre, will be bounded by boulders, and will contain informational signs. The Department will share in responsibility for maintaining the private roads used to reach the parking area. The Department will remove garbage and trash in a timely manner.

Public motor vehicle access is limited to the section of Kickerville Lane that goes to the public parking area.

The Department may allow persons with disabilities permitted motor vehicle access (not including ATVs) on a limited number of roads and trails for the purpose of accessing designated campsites, lean-tos, and fishing areas.

Signs will direct the public to designated parking and inform the public of the rights and restrictions that apply to public use. A kiosk will be built at the parking lot. The Department may post the perimeter of the recreational property.

The landowner may close to public use those areas that are being actively logged. No more than 250 acres may be closed at any one time.

B. Recreation

The Mud Pond Area is open all year for public use. The McRorie Lake Area is open to the public for ten months of the year, historically this parcel has been closed to the public between June 24th and August 23rd. There is currently no public use of the Base Camp Area, except for what may be allowed in the future by mutual agreement.

Public recreational uses allowed on Cedarlands include: hiking, mountaineering, tenting, camping, hunting, fishing, snowshoeing, ski touring, birding, nature study, non-motorized boating, canoeing, kayaking, rowing, picnicking, and swimming. Horseback riding and use of bicycles shall be allowed only upon mutual agreement of both parties, permission to not be unreasonably withheld. Use of snowmobiles on designated roads or trails will be allowed only with the agreement of the landowner and only after the erection of signs, gates and other structures to control snowmobile use.

No public use of motorboats or other motorized watercraft, airplanes or helicopters is allowed on Cedarlands. Boats are limited to car-top, non-motorized boats, and public access to water bodies will only be from locations designated with the agreement of the landowner.

Fishing and hunting will be permitted on Cedarlands, subject to general regulations. Discharge of firearms on Cedarlands, except when related to hunting, is not permitted. The Department has the right to manage fish and wildlife resources for the long-term use and benefit of the public and the landowner. Fisheries management requires written consent of the landowner.

Trapping is not allowed on Cedarlands.

C. Structures and Improvements

Mountain bike and horseback riding trails may be built and maintained.

A trail from the general public parking area to Mud Pond may be built and maintained.

A trail for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing may be built and maintained around the perimeter of McRorie Lake. The Perimeter Trail may be up to 6 feet wide around the perimeter of the lake and will consist of existing hiking trails, access roads and logging roads to the maximum extent possible. Where construction is needed, new trail sections may be located within the 300-foot water body and wetland buffer, but no closer than 50 feet of the shoreline of McRorie Lake. New trail sections will be constructed in a manner so as to prevent erosion and impairment of water quality in McRorie Lake and other water bodies and wetlands. The Perimeter Trail may go through the Base Camp Area with landowner consent of the route. The section of the Perimeter Trail within the Base Camp Area will be located to avoid view of any Base Camp Area structures.

Public camping on Cedarlands will only be permitted at sites that have been designated with the agreement of the landowner. The easement states there will be a minimum of eight sites, the locations of which will be made known to the public through information boards and signs. There will be no camping in a motor home, bus, van, recreational vehicle, camper trailer or similar vehicle unless mutually agreed upon. The lean-to at Big Brook may not be used by the public when it is in use by the landowner. Firewood may be gathered by the public only from dead and down trees and only for use at designated campsites for cooking, warmth or smudge.

Generally, no new structures may be built on the Mud Pond or McRorie Lake parcels. An exception is that lean-tos, water provision facilities and outhouses (or other sanitary facilities) may be built in the vicinity of designated campsites. Another exception is that non-residential structures necessary for forest management, road maintenance and/or erosion control (culverts, water bars, gates, fences, barriers and signs) are allowed to be built.

The easement allows for a commercial sand and gravel mining operation on the property, about 0.25 miles south of the public parking area. This 25-acre area, which includes a buffer around the mine, is closed to the public when it is in use. The mine is no longer operational and the area is in the process of being reclaimed. The public will be allowed to enter the gravel mining area after the reclamation work is completed.

IV. Proposed Management

A. Public Recreational Uses

Public recreational uses that will be promoted on Cedarlands include hiking, nature study, birding, camping, hunting, fishing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, kayaking and canoeing. Access for persons with disabilities will be a significant focus of the recreational opportunities created.

Camping will only be allowed at designated campsites and lean-tos.

Some roads and trails will be opened to mountain bike use. Additional opportunities may be opened in the future with the agreement of the landowner.

Trapping will not be allowed on the property.

The trails on Cedarlands will not be opened for public horse use at this time.

Public recreational use of snowmobiles will not be allowed on Cedarlands at this time.

B. Infrastructure Development

A map of proposed facilities is located in Appendix 1.

1. Access

Mud Pond Area

- The parking area will be improved; it will be expanded to 150 feet long by 60 feet wide and will be delineated with boulders or posts. Four of the parking spaces will be built to accessible standards. An accessible pit privy will be installed near the parking area. A gate will be installed at the private right-of-way that goes through the parking area.
- Public motor vehicle use on Kickerville Lane will be prohibited north of the parking area. A Motorized Access Program of People with Disabilities (MAPPWD) route will be opened from the parking lot, heading north on the Kickerville Lane and then onto Fishing Camp Road. The MAPPWD designation of this road will permit motor vehicle use, other than ATVs, by individuals with permits.
- Waterway access sites designed to accommodate persons with disabilities will be built on the east shore of Mud Pond and on the inlet to Mud Pond.
- A 1,880-foot long accessible canoe carry will be built from the parking area to an accessible waterway access site on the south shore of Mud Pond.
- A 560-foot long foot trail will be built to connect the above mentioned canoe carry with Fishing Camp Road.
- An existing 610-foot long canoe carry that goes from Mud Pond inlet to Fishing Camp Road will be improved to accessible trail standards.

Development of a public waterway access site to Big Brook was considered. It has been determined that access to Big Brook will not be included at this time due to the sensitive shoreline and restrictive water conditions (beaver dams, wetlands and low summer water levels).

McRorie Lake Area

- A 235-foot accessible canoe carry trail will be constructed from Fishing Camp Road to a waterway access site on the McRorie Lake outlet.
- An accessible parking area for two vehicles will be constructed for use by MAPPWD permit holders wishing to use the waterway access sites at McRorie Lake outlet or the Mud Pond inlet.
- A waterway access site designed to accommodate persons with disabilities will be built on the McRorie Lake outlet.
- MAPPWD access will be allowed on Fishing Camp Road after the road is improved to a safe and sustainable condition to accommodate the motor vehicle use.

2. Campsites

The Department will designate eight public campsites on Cedarlands. A privy will be installed at each site. The Department may install accessible lean-tos at any of these campsites. Additional campsites may be built with the landowner's agreement.

The public's use of the campsites will be similar to what is allowed under regulations for State Land (6 NYCRR190.4). Groups of 10 or more people need a camping permit from the area forest ranger; the camping permit will allow a maximum of 12 people to camp at a site. Anyone camping for more than 3 nights will need a camping permit.

Mud Pond Area – four campsites will be built in this area.

- One site will be located adjacent to the proposed access trail near, but not within sight of, Mud Pond. This is a large, open, relatively flat area that may be suitable for group camping. This campsite will be built to accessible standards.
- A second campsite on Mud Pond will be created about 500 feet from the first site.
- A third site will be located on the north shore of Mud Pond.
- A fourth site will be located at an old log landing near the proposed accessible canoe carry trail to McRorie Lake outlet. This site would be accessible from Fishing Camp Road and would be intended for use mainly during the big game hunting season. This campsite will be built to accessible standards.
- Even though the Big Brook Lean-to is in the Mud Pond Area, the easement states that it may not be used by the public when it is in use by the landowner. The lean-to has been used by the landowner extensively during the summer and also on many weekends throughout the year. Therefore, at this time, the Department will not allow the public to use the Big Brook Lean-to at any time.

McRorie Lake Area - four campsites and two lean-tos will be located along the shoreline of McRorie Lake.

- A campsite on the north shore of the lake. This campsite will be built to accessible standards.
- Two lean-tos on the west shore of the lake. The southern-most lean-to was built in 2017. The older lean-to that is about 500 feet north from this spot will be replaced with a new lean-to.
- A campsite on the west shore of McRorie Lake near the trail to Mud Pond Mountain.
- A campsite on the peninsula on the east shore of McRorie Lake.
- A campsite on the west shore of the lake.

3. Recreation Trails

In addition to the access trails listed above, a system of recreation trails will be developed on the property.

- The current Mud Pond Mountain Trail and Rock Pond Mountain Trail will be maintained for hiking use. The Department may reroute the trails to address natural resource concerns.
- The existing McRorie Lake Trail will be maintained to provide access to McRorie Lake from Fishing Camp Road. This trail is about 0.4 miles long.
- A trail will be built to provide access from McRorie Lake to the Mud Pond Mountain Trail. This trail will be about 600 feet long. There is already a path at this location.
- The Rock Pond Mountain Trail will be extended to the shore of McRorie Lake. This extension will be about 300 feet long.
- The Perimeter Trail around McRorie Lake may be built, as identified in the easement. The route for the trail will use Fishing Camp Road around the west side of the lake, then the trail will follow an abandoned trail along the east side of McRorie Lake, run through part of the Base Camp Area, and end at the public parking area. It will be located using existing hiking trails or logging roads to the greatest extent possible. It will be no closer than 50 feet from McRorie Lake. The crossings of several wetlands and drainages still need planning as to the exact location and method of crossing. Some of these drainages have been blocked by beaver ponds which will make crossings more difficult. Use of the Perimeter Trail will only be allowed during the public recreational period (September to June). This trail will cross the Base Camp Area, but will be located so that buildings will not be visible from the trail. Use of the Perimeter Trail will be the only public access allowed through the Base Camp Area. This trail will be open for mountain bike use.
- Mountain bikes will be allowed on Fishing Camp Road. Mountain bikes will also be allowed on the McRorie Lake Trail. When the Perimeter Trail is completed mountain bikes will be allowed to use it. If it is determined that some of the other logging roads and skid trails are suitable for mountain bike use they may be so designated, with landowner approval.

4. Water Access

The following sites will be designated non-motorized boat water access areas: the hand launch sites on Mud Pond and McRorie Lake, designated campsites, and the trails that start on the shore of McRorie Lake. A canoe landing may be provided at these locations.

5. Winter Use

To facilitate winter use of Cedarlands the Department will need to develop a partnership to ensure that the parking area and access road are plowed during the winter.

To make the Perimeter Trail more attractive for winter use, such as cross-country skiing or snowshoeing, the trail may be groomed by a snowmobile with a drag. The Department would need to develop a partnership to conduct the grooming.

The public use of snowmobiles will not be allowed on Cedarlands. The Department does not have the right to construct a trail that would connect to an adjacent property. The terrain and size of the Cedarlands property is not conducive to a contained snowmobile trail system that would be of significant recreational value.

Ice fishing will be allowed on Mud Pond and McRorie Lake.

6. Signage

Signs used on Cedarlands will inform the public of allowed recreational uses and any use restrictions.

- Signs will be used to direct the public to the main parking area.
- A sign may be erected at the main entrance and/or State Route 30 with identifying information about the conservation easement.
- A kiosk will be installed at the main parking area to provide information and directions to facilities and campsites. The kiosk will have general information that will encourage proper use of Cedarlands. The kiosk may include a trail register.
- Trail markers may be used to identify trail routes.
- Campsites will be marked with the standard DEC campsite markers.
- No parking signs will be maintained where needed along Kickerville Lane.

C. Application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), along with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title V, Section 504, have had a profound effect on the manner by which people with disabilities are afforded equality in their recreational pursuits. The ADA is a comprehensive law prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in employment practices, use of public transportation, use of telecommunication facilities and use of public accommodations. Title II of the ADA requires, in part, that reasonable modifications must be made to the services and programs of public entities, so that when those services and programs are viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. This must be done unless such modification would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the service, program or activity or an undue financial or administrative burden.

Title II also requires that new facilities, and parts of facilities that are newly constructed for public use, are to be accessible to people with disabilities. In rare circumstances where accessibility is determined to be structurally impracticable due to terrain, the facility, or part of facility is to be accessible to the greatest extent possible and to people with various types of disabilities.

Consistent with ADA requirements, the Department incorporates accessibility for people with disabilities into the planning, construction and alteration of recreational facilities and assets supporting them. This Recreation Management Plan (RMP) incorporates an inventory of all the recreational facilities or assets supporting the programs and services that were negotiated with the landowner to be available on the easement. The level of accessibility that exists or may be developed to the programs, services and facilities on the easement is also assessed. In conducting this assessment, DEC employs guidelines which ensure that programs are accessible, including buildings, facilities, and vehicles, in terms of architecture and design, transportation and communication to individuals with disabilities.

Any new facilities, assets and accessibility improvements to existing facilities or assets proposed in this RMP are identified in the section containing proposed management actions.

The Department is not required to make each of its existing facilities and assets accessible as long as the Department's programs, taken as a whole, are accessible.

For copies of any of the above mentioned laws or guidelines relating to accessibility, contact the DEC Universal Access Program Coordinator at UniversalAccessProgram@dec.ny.gov

D. Regulations

The Department will allow and promote public recreational use of Cedarlands to the extent allowed by the conservation easement and so that the adverse physical and social impacts from public use are reasonably mitigated. When public recreational use must be controlled to prevent misuse and overuse, it is best to do so by education and the application of minimal regulations or practices necessary to bring the desired result. To achieve this, the Department uses indirect methods (limiting parking, etc.) whenever possible, and developing regulations only where necessary and as a final resort.

6NYCRR §190.12 provides general regulations governing the public use of conservation easement lands. These regulations afford the Department significant management authority on Cedarlands. The Department will develop regulations specific to Cedarlands if the minimum tool approach indicates that they should be adopted to provide means of enforcing public compliance with easement requirements. The wording of any regulation will be crafted to accommodate the rights reserved in the easement for the landowner and the Department.

E. Maintenance

The Department will maintain the facilities used by the public. This will include the parking area, roads, water access sites, trails, and campsites. The Department will share, as appropriate, in the maintenance of facilities that are used by the public and the Landowner.

F. Resource management

The development of the facilities and recreational use will have some impacts to the natural resources of the property. It is anticipated that these impacts will not be significant. The potential for impacts was considered during the development of the proposals and the locations for these facilities. Ongoing monitoring will need to take place once the facilities are developed and public recreation use occurs. The levels of usage, timing of use, and the types of use will influence the impacts that will occur. Management action will need to be taken if negative impacts to resources occurs.

G. Public Input

To engage stakeholders during the recreation management planning process, a public meeting was held in June 2017, with a public comment period held between June 14th – July 14th, to solicit public suggestions for the Cedarlands Conservation Easement. Appendix 3 lists the public comments received and the responses to each.

V. Schedule for Implementation and Estimated Budget

The following tables outline a schedule for the implementation of proposed management actions and their estimated costs. Accomplishments are contingent upon sufficient staffing and funding.

Annual Activities	Estimated Annual Cost
Maintain trails, including blowdown removal, brushing and trail marking. 5.9 miles x $300/mile.	$1,770
Share maintenance of Kickerville Road from the end of the town highway to the public parking area. 1.0 miles x $2,000/mile Department share.	$2,000
Maintain MAPPWD route to north shore of McRorie Lake. 3.2 miles x $1,000/mile Department share.	$3,200
Maintain facilities.	$1,000
Total Cost Annual	**$7,970**

Phase One	Estimated Cost
Improve the main parking area.	$7,000
Install an informational kiosk at the public parking area.	$1,000
Construct accessible trail from parking area to Mud Pond. Construct accessible waterway access site on shore of Mud Pond.	$5,000
Improve the trail from Fishing Camp Road to Mud Pond inlet.	$1,000
Construct accessible trail from Fishing Camp Road to McRorie Lake outlet stream. Construct an accessible waterway access site on shore of McRorie Lake outlet stream.	$2,000
Total Phase One Cost	**$16,000**

Phase Two	Estimated Cost
Improve Fishing Camp Road so that it can be opened for MAPPWD use.	$20,000
Construct parking area with two accessible parking spaces on Fishing Camp Road.	$3,000

Build eight designated campsites.	$4,500
Replace the lean-to on west shore of McRorie Lake.	$9,000
Total Phase Two Cost	**$36,500**

Phase Three	Estimated Cost
Adopt the Mud Pond Mountain trail and Rock Pond Mountain trail as official trails.	$2,000
Build the Perimeter Trail around McRorie Lake (approximately 2.5 miles).	$14,000
Total Phase Three Cost	**$16,000**

Phase Four	Estimated Cost
Install additional lean-tos at campsites.	$9,000

VI. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Maps

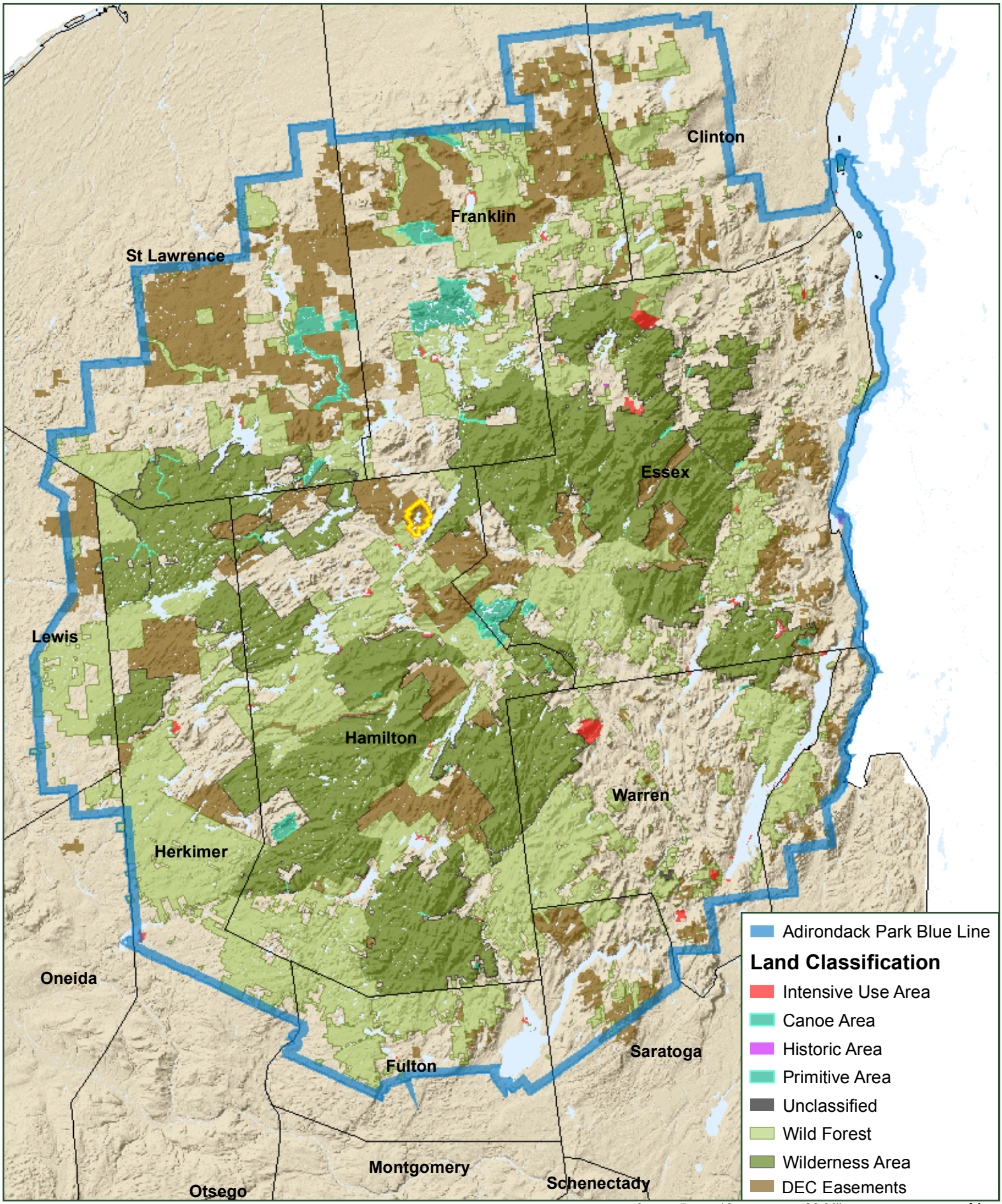
1. Location
2. Conservation Easement Areas
3. Wetlands
4. Existing Facilities
5. Proposed Actions

Appendix 2 – State Environmental Quality Review Act

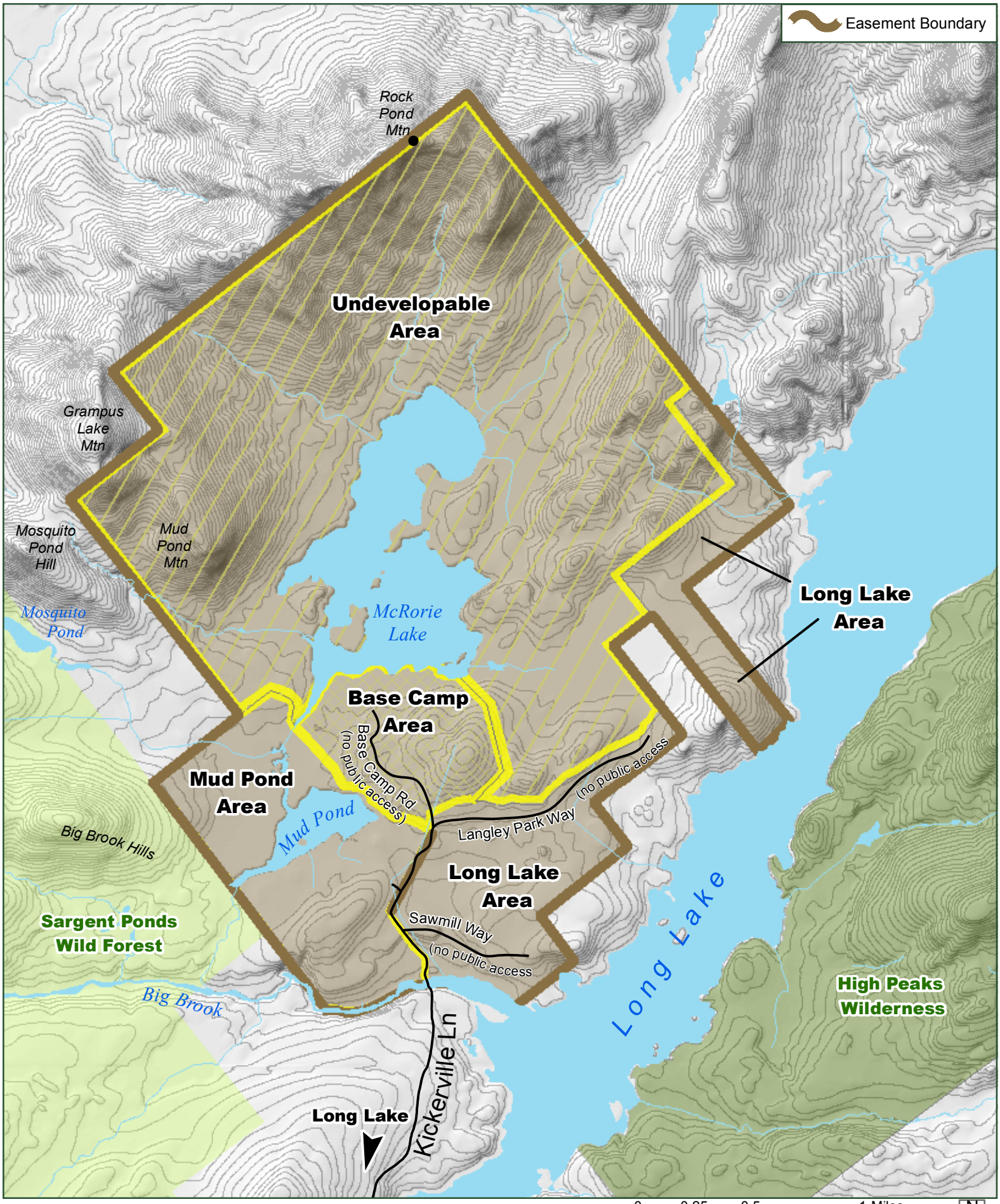
Appendix 3 – Response to Public Comment

Cedarlands Conservation Easement

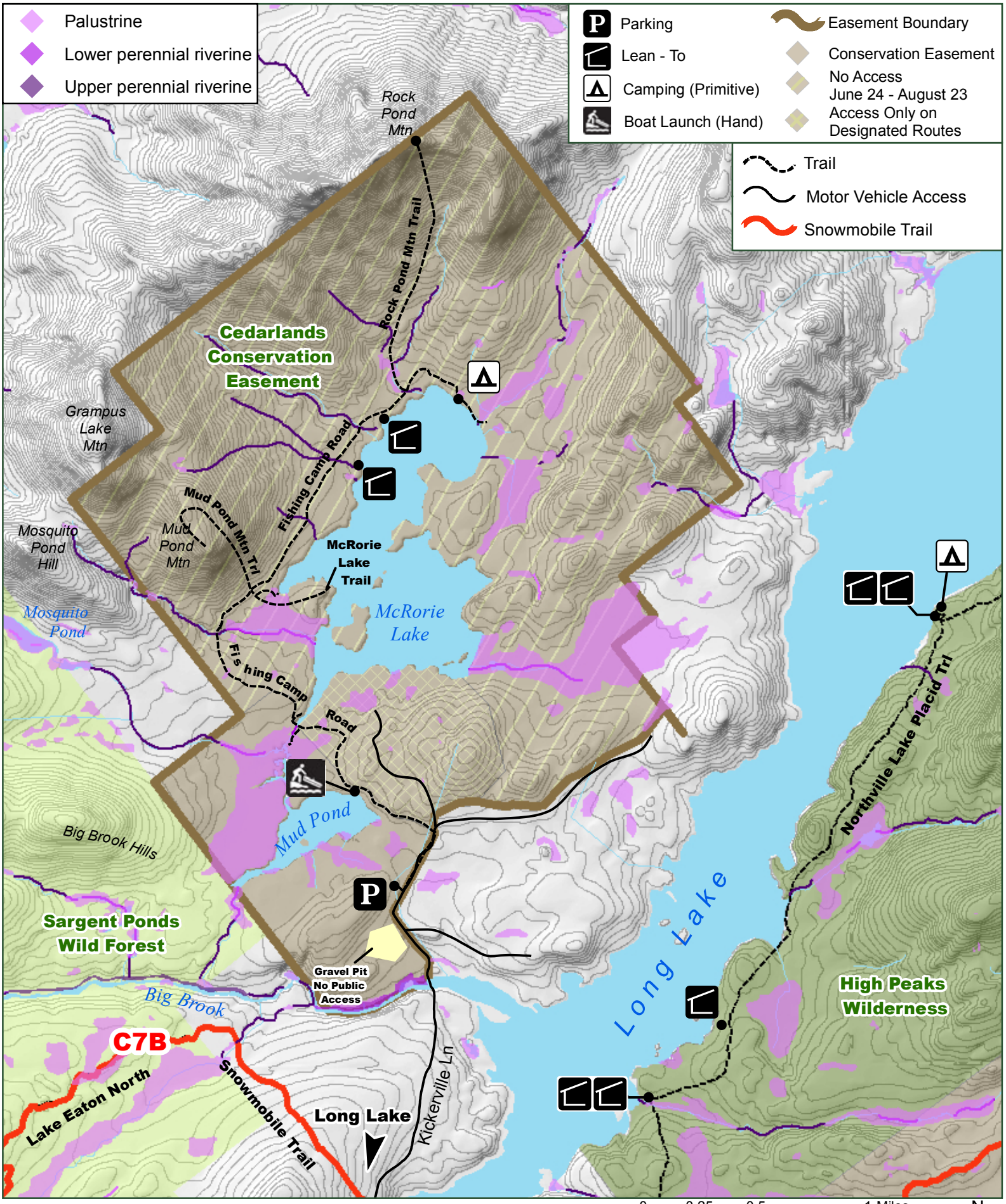
Location Map



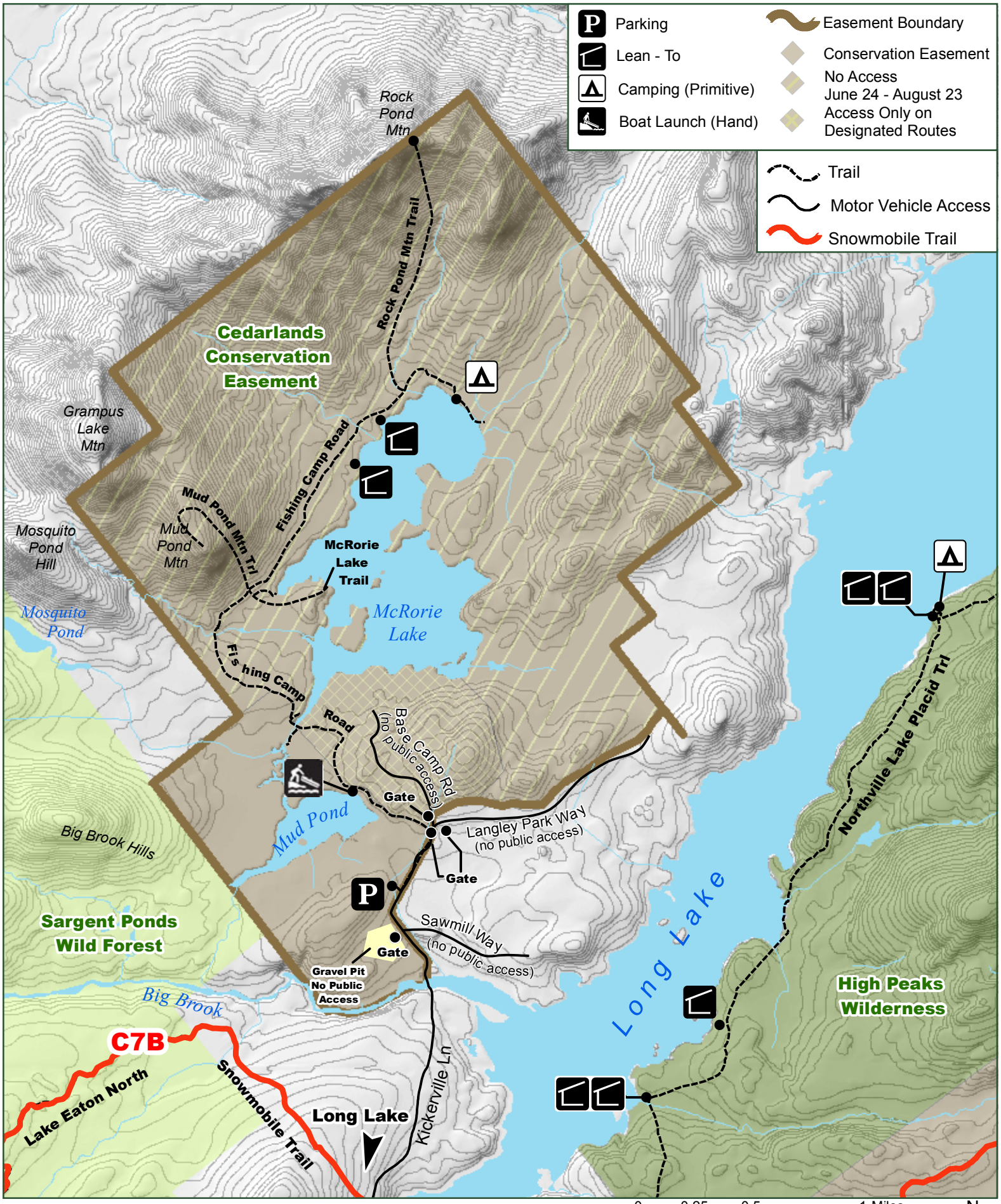
Cedarlands Conservation Easement



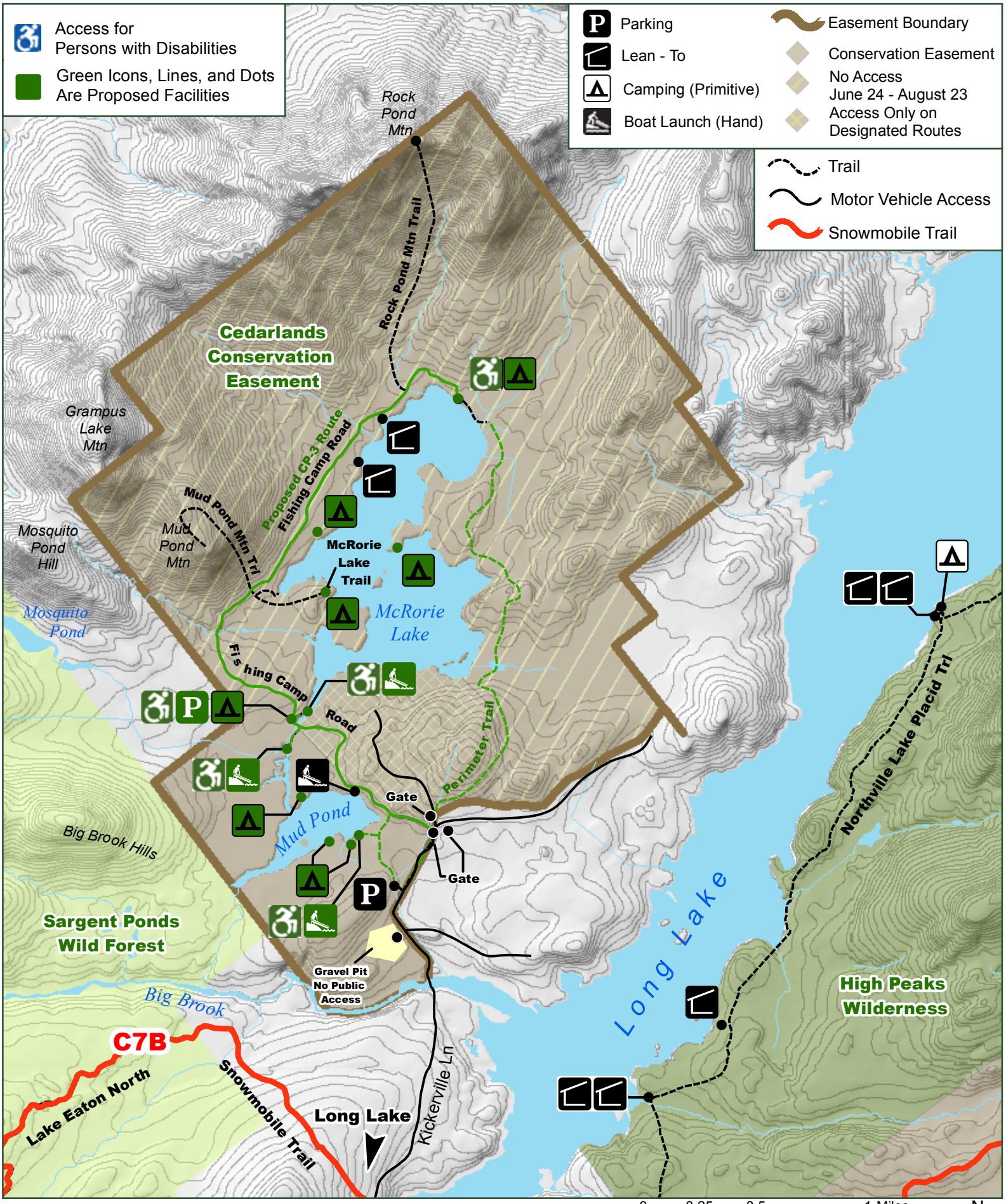
Cedarlands Conservation Easement



Cedarlands Conservation Easement



Cedarlands Conservation Easement



Agency Use Only [IfApplicable]
Project : Cedarland Easement RMP
Date :

Full Environmental Assessment Form
Part 3 - Evaluation of the Magnitude and Importance of Project Impacts and Determination of Significance

Part 3 provides the reasons in support of the determination of significance. The lead agency must complete Part 3 for every question in Part 2 where the impact has been identified as potentially moderate to large or where there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action will not, or may, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.

Based on the analysis in Part 3, the lead agency must decide whether to require an environmental impact statement to further assess the proposed action or whether available information is sufficient for the lead agency to conclude that the proposed action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact. By completing the certification on the next page, the lead agency can complete its determination of significance.

Reasons Supporting This Determination:
To complete this section:

- Identify the impact based on the Part 2 responses and describe its magnitude. Magnitude considers factors such as severity, size or extent of an impact.
- Assess the importance of the impact. Importance relates to the geographic scope, duration, probability of the impact occurring, number of people affected by the impact and any additional environmental consequences if the impact were to occur.
- The assessment should take into consideration any design element or project changes.
- Repeat this process for each Part 2 question where the impact has been identified as potentially moderate to large or where there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action will not, or may, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.
- Provide the reason(s) why the impact may, or will not, result in a significant adverse environmental impact
- For Conditional Negative Declarations identify the specific condition(s) imposed that will modify the proposed action so that no significant adverse environmental impacts will result.
- Attach additional sheets, as needed.

The majority of the projects proposed in this Recreation Management Plan (RMP) are minor. Construction is proposed, generally, in areas already cleared or previously disturbed. Where new construction is necessary, Best Management Practices will be followed, minimal numbers of trees and shrubs will be removed and wherever possible, improvements will be kept away from streams, wetlands and unstable slopes.

Question #1, Impact on Land
Construction of campsites/pit privies, lean-tos and parking areas will be sited in predominately cleared areas, although a small number of trees may need to be removed for adequate siting. In addition, brushing of the sites might also be required. The sites will require leveling of the ground and some surface work, possibly the application of stone or gravel. Pit privies associated with campsites and lean-tos will be located to promote sanitation and prevent site degradation. They will be sited at least 150 feet from any water source to prevent surface water contamination and will be checked annually and relocated if necessary. Improvement to an existing parking area may also require the removal of a small number of trees and possible brushing and surface work involving leveling of the ground and possible application of stone or gravel. Construction of new trails and trail segments as well as improvements to existing trails may also require the removal of a small number of trees as well as some brushing. Some leveling of the ground and surface work may also be needed. New construction will be minor since, in most cases, existing skid roads and access trails will make up the majority of the trail with new segments connecting to those already existing routes. There may be some erosion resulting from construction and use of facilities, in addition to impacts associated with public camping, such as trampling of vegetation and soil compaction. Construction of and use of facilities may result in some erosion which will be controlled by the use of drainage devices such as water bars and broad based dips. Potential impacts will also be minimized by following Best Management Practices such as: locating structures and facilities on flat, stable, well-drained sites; locating improvements to minimize necessary cut and fill; locating improvements away from streams, wetlands and unstable slopes; avoid channeling public recreation to areas where sensitive species are known to exist, use soil stabilization practices on exposed soil around construction areas immediately after construction and use natural materials to blend structures into the natural surroundings.

Question #3, Impacts on Surface Water
Accessible waterway access sites will be built on Mud Pond and the inlet to Mud Pond and on the McRorie Lake outlet. Portions of these structures will be located in the water body, however the amount of these structures in the water will be small in scale. These structures will be as small as possible while still complying with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. Posts for these structures will be anchored into bottom sediment. There is not expected to be any significant impact to the areas where these waterway access sites will be located, other than a possible temporary increase in the turbidity of the water surrounding the site during construction, hand cutting of a small number of plants and some shading of plants due to the structures, following construction. There may be some minor construction in wetland areas where trails will be built to access water bodies, however these will be as limited in scope as much as possible to avoid any potential disturbance to the wetland. These projects may require permit(s) from the Adirondack Park Agency which would require an additional environmental review.

See attachment to Part 3 for additional text

Determination of Significance - Type 1 and Unlisted Actions

SEQR Status: ☑ Type 1 ☐ Unlisted

Identify portions of EAF completed for this Project: ☑ Part 1 ☑ Part 2 ☑ Part 3

Upon review of the information recorded on this EAF, as noted, plus this additional support information
Recreation Management Plan and location maps

and considering both the magnitude and importance of each identified potential impact, it is the conclusion of the New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation as lead agency that:

☑ A. This project will result in no significant adverse impacts on the environment, and, therefore, an environmental impact statement need not be prepared. Accordingly, this negative declaration is issued.

☐ B. Although this project could have a significant adverse impact on the environment, that impact will be avoided or substantially mitigated because of the following conditions which will be required by the lead agency:

There will, therefore, be no significant adverse impacts from the project as conditioned, and, therefore, this conditioned negative declaration is issued. A conditioned negative declaration may be used only for UNLISTED actions (see 6 NYCRR 617.d).

☐ C. This Project may result in one or more significant adverse impacts on the environment, and an environmental impact statement must be prepared to further assess the impact(s) and possible mitigation and to explore alternatives to avoid or reduce those impacts. Accordingly, this positive declaration is issued.

Name of Action: Adoption the Cedarlands Conservation Easement Recreation Management Plan

Name of Lead Agency: New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Division of Lands and Forests

Name of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency: Kramer Kwaczala

Title of Responsible Officer: Forester

Signature of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency: Kramer Kwaczala Date: 3/25/19

Signature of Preparer (if different from Responsible Officer) Kramer Kwaczala for Steve Guglielmi Date: 3/19/2019

For Further Information:

Contact Person: Steven Guglielmi

Address: PO Box 296, 1115 NYS Route 86; Ray Brook, NY 12977

Telephone Number: (518) 897-1291

E-mail: sjguglie@gw.dec.state.ny.us

For Type 1 Actions and Conditioned Negative Declarations, a copy of this Notice is sent to:

Chief Executive Officer of the political subdivision in which the action will be principally located (e.g., Town / City / Village of)
Other involved agencies (if any)
Applicant (if any)
Environmental Notice Bulletin: http://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/enb.html

PRINT FULL FORM

Attachment to Part 3 Full EAF

Question #7, Impact on Plants and Animals

The removal of a small number of trees as well as brushing may be necessary for construction of facilities. Care will be taken to avoid any endangered or threatened habitats. Loons, a species of special concern will be protected by the terms of the conservation easement which protects the shoreline and prohibits motorboat use. Since the area is presently used by the public, it is not anticipated that new facility development will result in such an increase in use that it would cause significant adverse impact. Information available to the public regarding proper recreational use practices will be helpful in minimizing any potential impacts resulting from use of the area. In addition, facilities will be inspected periodically to ensure there is no degradation to natural resources. If environmental degradation occurs, appropriate action, such as closure of a trail will be taken.

None of the impacts resulting from the management actions proposed in this plan will have significant adverse impact on the environment. Potential impacts resulting from actions proposed in this RMP will be small in scale, minor in magnitude and will be readily reversible. Recreational use will be on a small portion of the property.

Appendix 3 - Response to Public Comments

Environmental concerns

1. **On page 8 Forest Resources and Vegetation – the reference to cloud sedge and that it is an endangered species. How will this be handled with the planned Recreational Use? What will be done to protect the cloud sedge and how will it be monitored?**

   The report of cloud sedge being located on the property was a historical occurrence. It has not been confirmed as currently on the property. Cloud sedge is globally secure, but in New York it is imperiled. Additional information about cloud sedge has been put in the RMP.

2. **On page 9 Wildlife – the reference to Species of Note – Common Loon being of special concern and the Pied Billed Grebe a threatened species. How will this be handled with the planned usage of the area. How will the wildlife be protected and how will it be monitored?**

   The pied billed grebe report indicated that the location should not experience recreational impacts. Loons would be protected by the terms of the conservation easement, which protects the shoreline and limits motorboat use.

3. **The focus on recreational access and use must not subvert the conservation, preservation, and protection of the parcel's significant environmental and natural resources.**

   The authors of the Cedarlands RMP acknowledge and appreciate this comment.

4. **The Cedarlands RMP lists several Critical Resource Areas (CRAs) that raise management concerns in relation to recreation-induced impacts. Wetlands serve a range of important functions such as preservation of biodiversity, water quality, and protecting shorelines. With the presence of seven significant wetlands that cover over 8% of the tract. Additionally, the presence of cloud sedge, a state endangered plant species, and the pied-billed grebe, a state threatened species, and the common loon, a state special concern species, obligate the Department to prioritize resource protection over recreation opportunities on certain sections of this tract. Rock Pond Mountain, at an elevation of 3,000 feet, is also greater than the 2,500 ft. elevation threshold identified as sensitive habitat by the Adirondack Park Agency. The RMP would be much improved if the document clearly delineated how it will protect these sensitive habitats and species.**

   Additional language regarding the species mentioned has been added to the RMP. Language about the need to monitor and address impacts caused by public recreation has been added. The only action proposed for the area with in a critical environmental area above 2,500 in elevation is the maintenance of an existing trail. A wetland permit from the Adirondack Park Agency may be required prior to the construction some of the projects.

5. **The draft RMP proposes appropriate management actions for recreation, however, it is deficient in long-term resource management and monitoring information. A parcel cannot be adequately managed for recreational purposes without fully addressing its ecological factors and limitations. If such analysis has been developed, then that**

information should be made publicly available to allow for a robust and transparent public review process.

The purpose of the RMP is to focus on the public recreation allowed on the property. The impacts that will result from the proposals are considered. The conservation easement terms that deal with the management of other resources and monitoring of the property are important, but are not covered in this RMP.

6. **The presence of NYS endangered, threatened, and species of special concern found on the tract warrants the development of a monitoring process to inform planning and resource management decisions through time.**

   More information has been added to the RMP discussing these species.

7. **RMP related roads and access areas for motor vehicle use for persons with disabilities need to account for sensitive ecosystems, such as wetlands, throughout the Cedarlands tract in order to educate its users and to diligently manage and protect these fragile areas.**

   Impacts from public motor vehicle use is a concern. It is anticipated that vehicle usage will be infrequent and vehicles will be traveling at a low speed which would limit the impacts. If public recreation results in significant negative impacts to sensitive ecosystems, then action will be taken address the problems.

Facilities

1. **On page 13 Structures – the reference to the Perimeter trail indicates it will be up to 6 feet wide. How will this be constructed? Will it be kept as is and just widened? Will it be graded and then a gravel surface? Will it be paved?**

   This trail will be built using standard trail construction practices. Motor vehicles may be used for the construction. Much of the surface will be dirt. Crushed stone may be used to raise sections of the trail where mud would be a concern. The trail will not be paved.

2. **On page 15 – Infrastructure – there are many references to trails, canoe carries and a roadway being constructed to be accessible under the American's with Disabilities Act. Can you tell me how the construction will be done? Will these be paved? Gravel? Dirt/sand?**

   Trails will be built to standard trail practices. The roads will be improved to appropriate standards to allow for safe public motor vehicle use. Motor vehicles may be used for road and trail work. No road or trail will be paved. Compacted crushed stone mix will be used on accessible trails.

3. **The biggest issue with the conservation easement over the past fifteen years, and what seems that it will continue to be a problem under the Draft Recreation Management Plan, is parking. The short, unimproved dirt road off Kickerville Lane that leads to the parking area has a steep hill, is eroded, and is generally in poor condition. Access to cars without high ground clearance is difficult year round, very difficult in mud season, and impassible in winter (even if it were plowed). If the parking remains in the current**

location, the grade of this road needs to be lessened and the road needs to be generally improved to allow year round access. But an even better solution is to locate a more suitable parking area. The gravel pit is currently not being operated, and I understand it is being permanently closed. The road leading to it is flat, and there is ample cleared area for parking. This would make a good new parking area, or another area that is more suitable than the current parking area could be located.

The terms of the conservation easement stipulate the location of the parking area. With additional work, the current parking area and the access road should be able to be improved to make it easier for public use.

4. **The proposed ski trail is a great idea, and grooming it will make it a significant public asset. Of course, wider winter use will require a parking area that is accessible during the winter. Even if plowed, the current, short, unimproved road to the parking area is too steep for public winter access. The most significant current impediment to winter use is the poor condition of the parking area and the short access road to it.**

   Work will be done to make the parking lot easier to access. There are special concerns about access during the winter.

Public use

1. **When is this area open to the public? It appears the area was historically available 10 months of the year. Will this be changing? Additional traffic on the road leading to the proposed parking area when the Boy Scouts and other seasonal property owners are using their properties, increases the dangers of the road.**

   The Mud Pond area of the property is available for public use year round. The McRorie Lake area of the property will continue to be available to the public for ten months, from August 24 until June 23. The dates may be changed with the agreement of the landowner.

2. **There are many individuals, such as elderly and those families with young children, all without CP-3 permits, who will find it difficult to utilize this beautiful wilderness. Since the purpose of this conservation easement is to address available public recreation opportunities, we respectfully request the DEC revisit the access opportunities so that groups of all ages and abilities have as many access points as possible**.

   The terms of the conservation easement grant limited public access to the property. The RMP must comply with these terms. There is a provision that allows for increased access to persons with mobility impairments.

3. **I love the Cedarlands property and believe that Lake McRorie is one of the most beautiful lakes in the park. Even though the camp has been closed to summer camp for six years now, there are a good number of camp alumni that remain dedicated to the property. I am excited for more people to have the chance to utilize the property year-round. I would be interested in supporting the easement through efforts such as trail maintenance once the final trails are set, and I am sure other camp alumni who are dedicated to the property would help as well.**

   Volunteers will be important for the upkeep of facilities on the property.

4. **Need to look into the snowmobile activity. Need access for the public. Increased motorized access for all the public is needed. There is no reason to restrict motorized access.**

   The terms of the conservation easement limit, access to the property, and adjacent property rights limit options for snowmobile usage on the property.

5. **We appreciate the proposed management actions and recreational opportunities captured in the Cedarlands RMP that will afford the public diverse recreational experiences, like hiking, nature study, and increases in CP-3 access for persons with disabilities. Additionally, we support the limitation on public use of snowmobiles on the tract. Although this use is permitted by the conservation easement and the landowner retains the right to operate snowmobiles, the RMP rightly protects the sensitive ecosystems onsite and is in keeping with the character of the tract and the other uses allowed on the Property.**

   The authors of the Cedarlands RMP acknowledge and appreciate this comment.

Other considerations

1. **The proximity of Cedarlands adjacent to a tract of the Sargent Ponds Wild Forest poses an opportunity for DEC to incorporate complex planning between the two parcels and the surrounding Forest Preserve units. This level of planning is particularly appropriate as the Wild Forest is only accessible via the Cedarlands tract.**

   The focus of this RMP is the Cedarlands property, but the RMP does consider the adjacent properties.

2. **We ask DEC to develop a set of RMP standards that will be used to sculpt future RMPs in a way that is consistent with the specific conservation values and other legal parameters of a conservation easement.**

   The DEC has been developing a template that will be used for RMPs. The unique nature of conservation easements means that there will remain substantial variability in RMPs.

3. **Improvements should be made to strengthen the overall integrity of the document. In reviewing this RMP and previous ones, two fundamental concerns persist: the need for DEC to 1) include the full easement language for "Recitals" and "Conservation Value" sections found within the easement itself, and 2) develop a set of RMP standards that clearly identifies and includes within the RMP the easements' conservation values.**

   The authors of the Cedarlands RMP acknowledge and appreciate this comment.