

## Summary of Public Comments

The Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) received a total of 105 emails and letters on the proposed modification to the 1999 Long Pond Conservation Easement (CE) held by the Department on lands formerly owned by Danzer Forestland Inc. and now owned by JT Granshue Timberland LLC. The proposed modification was noticed in the Department's Environmental Notice Bulletin (ENB) on September 19, 2018 for a 30-day public comment period, which ended on October 19, 2018.

Thirty of the 105 emails and letters received expressed support for the proposed modification. Most of the support letters came from current camp lessees, local Government officials and the outdoor sporting community. Letters expressing concerns over the proposed modification were received from New York's environmental organizations. Sixty-seven of which were in the form of an email blast.

The following is a summary of the substantive comments and Department's response to each of these comments. Many comments within various letters were similar in nature and have been responded to in a combined response, which are noted before the responded statement. The Department did not respond to those comments in support of the modification.

Note: this summary was prepared prior to Danzer Forestland removing 22 camps which were not part of the conservation easement modification. Additionally, the Department acquired the 950-acre Net Conservation Benefit parcel in June 2021.

### **Appraisal and Taxes**

- 1. Comment:** "The fee owner Danzer determined the fair market value of each camp at the present time and totaled them to determine the trade value. It would have been fairer to the people of the State of New York if Danzer computed the present value of the cumulative lease revenue of the 15 camps. This is especially required where the 15 camps are expected to be paying lease revenues in perpetuity."

**Response:** *The Department hired the appraisers for this project. Danzer paid for the appraisal which was written for the Department and the Department's appraisal standards. The camps were valued based on an income stream computed to a present value. That final total income stream was then divided by*

*the number of camps supporting that revenue stream to arrive at a per camp value or payment.*

- 2. Comment:** How much were the camp owners paying on their leases and how does this amount, in perpetuity, compare with the cost of 300 acres? Now taxpayers will have to make up the property assessment to the local government.”

**Response:** *In response to concerns, the net conservation benefit parcel is now a 948-acre parcel located in the Towns of Clifton and Colton, encompassing a portion of the South Branch of the Grasse River, within the Adirondack Park, and will expand public recreational opportunities in this region of the Park. The appraised value of the 15 camp leases (allowed to remain per the Conservation Easement modification) will be applied toward the purchase price of the net conservation benefit parcel, which value exceeds the camp lease appraisal.*

- 3. Comment:** The camp owners trade shouldn't increase taxpayer burden. So how about they have to make tax payments on the 300 acres as long as they are permitted to keep camp on easement.

**Response:** *The 948-acre net conservation benefit parcel, which will become forest preserve once acquired, will be taxed in accordance with Real Property Tax Law, Article 5, Section 532.*

### **Net Conservation Benefit**

- 4. Comment:** The proposed "net conservation benefit" of lands adjoining the Whiskey Flats State Forest is inadequate. The proposed modification “must be calculated and considered within the spatial confines of the conservation easement in question or in the surrounding contiguous and adjoining lands. The Whiskey Flats State Forest lands are not near the Long Pond tract and are outside the Adirondack Park boundary.
- 5. Comment:** Concerned with the Department's proposed “net benefit” regulatory determination that buying land outside the Adirondack Park for the Whiskey Flats Wild Forest in Hopkinton constitutes the net benefit when weighed against the proposed permanent retention of 15 more camp structures and accessory buildings, each on 1-acre building envelopes inside the park. At the very least, the Department should be considering buying Forest Preserve inside the Adirondack Park as a net benefit to such a significant CE modification to retain many more hunting camps than the 1999 CE allowed.

**Combined Response (4-5):** *Although Part 592 does not require the conservation benefit (parcel) be located inside the Adirondack Park, the Department decided to use the funds collected from the camp lessees by Danzer Forestland toward the purchase of approximately 948 acres of land along the South Branch of the Grass River. This acreage will be added to the Forest Preserve.*

6. **Comment:** “The Whiskey Flats land are neither “contiguous” or “adjoining” and fail as a matter of law to meet the quoted regulatory criteria. Moreover, the exchange of 300 acres outside the Adirondack Park for significant impairment of use for almost 19,000 acres within the Park is not a “net conservation benefit.” Not least in importance, the regulation clearly required a specific accounting, “calculated and considered” to demonstrate the benefit. There is no “calculation” here; there is merely a conclusory statement that there is a benefit.”

**Response:** *The Department does not agree that the retention of these 15 hunting camps will result in any significant impairment of either public use or the environment. Public recreation rights will not change because of the modification. The modification will reduce the number of camps by more than half - from the original 43 to 21. No other future development is allowed by the easement.*

### **6 NYCRR Part 592**

7. **Comment:** “In addition to the failure to fairly calculate and achieve an equal or greater monetary value inside the Adirondack Park, the proposed modification fails to meet the non-monetary standards set forth in 6 NYCRR Part 592.3(4), whereby a net loss of benefits to the state should be considered if the modification results in “any change in the level of public recreational opportunities or any change to the limitations or restrictions on the development, management or use of the property.” There are a number of changes in recreational opportunities, limitations and restrictions on development, and management and use caused by the proposed CE modification.”

**Response:** *The level of public recreation opportunities on the Long Pond CE lands will not be affected the CE modification. Full public recreational access will continue on the property as it has since 2014 when the landowners exclusive right to hunt expired. Development on the property is prohibited by the 1999 conservation easement.*

## Purpose of the Long Pond Conservation Easement

8. **Comment:** “The perpetual existence of these camps further undermines a basic tenet of the original conservation easement in which future development would be extinguished. Allowing these camps to remain fundamentally challenges the conservation values identified within the original easement and allows an area where development was to be removed in perpetuity, to now allow for 15 permanent structures to remain forever.”
9. **Comment:** “It grossly and irreversibly impacts the perpetual nature of the original benefits bargained for in the original easement: no, in perpetuity, instead of having only 6 hunting camps, there will be 21 hunting camps spread all over the 19,000 acres. This is not what the public bargained for and paid for.”
10. **Comment:** The State accorded great importance to the Long Pond tract due to the fact that these lands had been managed for timber and had not been subject to development. The purpose of the easement is to “limit future development”

***Combined Response (8-10):*** *The 1999 Long Pond Conservation Easement extinguished development except for the 43 camps that were on the property at the time the easement was purchased by the State. Six of the 43 camps could stay in perpetuity. The modification will reduce the number of camps by more than half - from the original 43 to 21. The 15 camps proposed to remain by the modification have been on the property for many years (since before the easement was put in place).*

*Allowance of one-acre privacy areas for 15 camps would account for a total of 15 acres out of 18,950 acres or less than eight hundredths of one percent (0.08%) would be restricted from public access under the easement modification.*

11. **Comment:** The amendments will not enhance protection of the environmental resources and it certainly does not limit future development, as the 15 additional hunting camps will have the rights to perpetual use, expanded to a certain limited size, with no limit on memberships.

***Response:*** *The size of the hunting camps is limited by the easement and this easement modification. Memberships to most of the 15 hunting camps is self-limiting, as the camps are not large enough to accommodate many members. Some of the camps only accommodate a handful of members, or largely a single family. Camps normally only receive significant use during the fall hunting season and much more limited use during the rest of the year. Please also see response to Comment #'s 8-10 above.*

**12. Comment:** “The original land conservation objectives of the easement are nullified by significantly increasing the intensity and duration of multiple human impacts on the property.”

**Response:** *The number of camps originally on the property will be reduced from the original 43 to 21, which will significantly reduce the human impacts on the property. Additionally, development is prohibited by the conservation easement. As DEC’s Conservation Easement program has evolved over the years, the Department has gained experience with hunting camps and their benefit to land management. We understand that the retention of traditional hunting camps on easement lands is consistent with conservation values, offering benefits such as reduced vandalism and providing cultural and economic benefits to the rural communities surrounding the property. These are important reasons why the Department supports this modification.*

**13. Comment:** “No such written finding exists that the proposed amendment enhances the original purpose of the Easement or that the Easement cannot accomplish its original purposes.”

**Response:** *The original purpose of the 1999 Long Pond conservation easement remains unchanged by this modification. The conservation easement will continue to protect open space by prohibiting development and limiting subdivision of the property while also allowing for the landowner to continue sustainable forest management. The easement also allows for the landowner to lease hunt camps to outdoor enthusiasts while also allowing for the public to recreate on the property. Allowing 15 camps to remain on the property is consistent with the original purposes of easement. Additionally, if this modification were to alter the purpose of the 1999 conservation easement, 6 NYCRR Part 592.4(c) requires the Department to prepare a written finding.*

**14. Comment:** “In my opinion it is both against the spirit of the original decision, and not in the best interest of this sacred nature preserve.”

**15. Comment:** “Please drop the Long Pond Conservation Easement change and live up to the original agreement. If we can’t trust you (DEC) now, there is no sense in trusting DEC in the future.”

**Combined Response (14-15):** *The modification does not change the spirit of the 1999 Conservation Easement. Public Recreation rights remain the same except that the public will not be allowed on the 15 one-acre camp envelopes around the camps that stay. The property is a privately owned, working forest that is managed for timber production and is not Forest Preserve. Development is prohibited by the easement.*

**16. Comment:** “The DEC has failed to justify the need to modify the Long Pond Conservation Easement. The loss of considerable public recreation rights through the retention of 15 camps permanently spread far and wide through the lands and the damaging permanent residential development on these lands.

**17. Comment:** The proposed change violates the original purposes of the conservation easement and its “perpetual nature” because 15 additional buildings will be widely distributed throughout the tract and lead to sprawl and environmental harms. When 15 camps are proposed to be allowed to remain in perpetuity, this seriously changes the perpetual nature of the public’s recreational rights.

***Combined Response (16-17):** Public recreational rights will not change as a result of this modification. Hunting camps are generally not considered residential development as they are not connected to utilities and are normally only occupied during parts of the year. In the winter the camps are normally only be accessible by snowmobile as the roads are generally not plowed and the property has no frontage on a public highway.*

### Camps

**18. Comment:** “These camps are widely disbursed throughout the property, which fragments the forest resources. Human habitations cause significant changes to forest health and ecosystem functions.”

**19. Comment:** “There is a great deal of research that documents the adverse impact of scattered development through forest lands. Residential structures (including hunting camps) in forest settings change the forest composition, wildlife patterns and species, bird nesting locations, and associated nearby plants and shrub communities. One residential structure can impact the ecological integrity of the greater forest area up to one-third of a mile or more from the developed areas.”

**20. Comment:** “The proposed change to allow 15 camps to remain permanently on these lands poses a long-term threat to the environmental health and ecological integrity of these forestlands.”

**21. Comment:** The proposed changes degrade the environment on the property by retaining residential structures, which in turn adversely impacts both the natural character of the land but also its wildlife. There is much research on the negative impacts of any form of residential development within forestlands.

**22. Comment:** “The proposed modification to the Long Pond Conservation Easement will degrade environmental protection by retaining 15 private camps that are spread throughout the tract in perpetuity. These camps will contribute to the sprawl and associated negative environmental impacts from development.”

**Combined Response (18-22):** *The forest itself is not being fragmented by the presence of 21 long standing hunting camp structures on over 18,950 acres (about 29 square miles) of land area. While humans can cause significant changes to forests and ecosystems, these seasonal hunting camps have minimal influence on forest composition, bird nesting locations, and nearby plant communities on the overall property.*

*The structures on the Long Pond CE land are hunting camps and not residential structures in the way most people understand them as they are not connected to utilities, are only occupied seasonally, and are not accessible except by snowmobile during the winter months.*

*Twenty-two remote camps existing on the property will be removed as part of this modification.*

**23. Comment:** “If these camps remain not only will development become a permanent part of the landscape, but so will the fragmentation that these camps pose. As recent studies from the Wildlife Conservation Society have shown, fragmentation by these kinds of remote (exurban) structures goes far beyond the one-acre envelope of the camp footprint and can affect up to 30 or more acres around each dwelling. With that factored in, the DEC should be looking to offset, at a minimum, more than 450-acres in total.”

**Response:** *Forest fragmentation is generally considered as the breaking of large contiguous forest areas into smaller pieces of forest: typically, these pieces are separated by roads, agriculture, utility corridors, subdivisions, or other human development. Nothing in this proposed modification will result in forest fragmentation. The space occupied by these seasonal hunting camps is minimal on an almost 19,000-acre property and this proposed modification will include the removal of 22 of the original 43 camps that existed on the property, resulting in less human impacts. Allowance of one-acre privacy areas for up to 15 camps would account for a total of 15 acres out of 18,950 acres or less than eight hundredths of one percent (0.08%) would be restricted from public access under the proposed easement modification. Additionally, the 948-acre conservation benefit property will be protected from future fragmentation and development.*

**24. Comment:** Please not to allow the state to take anymore from the camp owners. I have watched the devastation that this ordeal has caused them. One camp owner went nearly bankrupt trying to come up with the money to save his camp.

**Response:** *As the camp rights on these 15 camps (after a 15-year period) were purchased by the taxpayers of New York State when the easement was purchased, these camp rights cannot be given away. Therefore, the taxpayers need to be reimbursed for the camp values. By law, a conservation benefit is required to allow the camps to stay. Two independent appraisers determined the value of the camps and the lease values in perpetuity. These funds were combined with State monies to purchase the 948-acre parcel located in the Towns of Clifton and Colton, encompassing a portion of the South Branch of the Grasse River, within the Adirondack Park, and will expand public recreational opportunities in this region of the Park. It was the landowner's decision to charge camp owners the appraised value of each individual camp.*

### **Motor Vehicle and ATV Use**

**25. Comment:** “The Department failed to analyze the severe impact of the perpetual use of motor vehicles, ATVs, and UTVs by the camp lessees on the Long Pond CE. The severe detrimental impact of ATV use on the environment of forest lands is well documented in the Department’s Strategic Plan for the Management of State Forests.”

**Response:** *Many existing roads on the Long Pond easement are open to public ATV use along with use by lessees. The proposed easement modification will likely reduce both ATV, and motor vehicle use, along with the routes normally traveled by ATV’s and motor vehicles, since there will be 22 fewer camps on the property than existed at the time the state purchased the conservation easement in 1999. It should be remembered also that this is private commercial forest land that supports periodic timber harvesting activities.*

**26. Comment:** “The only likely public use will be for ATVs, which will probably be a further deterrent for the rest of the public and further degrade the already poor state of access roads. I also think that an ATV playground is incompatible with public land. Therefore, unless non-ATV access is greatly improved, I think the proposed land trade should be disapproved as a bad deal for the public.”

**27. Comment:** “By retaining many more hunting camps than the 1999 CE allowed and especially by turning the Long Pond CE into a defacto ATV riding park, one that which would likely detrimentally impact the adjoining lands of the Adirondack Forest Preserve”

**Combined Response (26-27):** *The Long Pond CE property is open to a wide variety of uses by the public, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, bird watching, biking, and camping. Certain routes on the property have been open*

*to ATV use by the public, along with the lessees for many years. This use has occurred without any significant adverse environmental impacts. There is no public motor vehicle use proposed on any adjacent Forest Preserve lands. Please also see response #25.*

**28. Comment:** “The recreational impact from the motor vehicle use of club members is much more intensive and has greater environmental impacts than non-motorized public uses.”

**Response:** *Motor vehicle use on the property is by both lessees and the public. Lessees are interested in non-motorized recreation also. Motor vehicles are limited to routes that are open to motor vehicles. Due to the remoteness of the 18,950-acre property, both lessees and the public must realistically use motor vehicles to gain access to the property, where they can undertake their preferred type of recreation.*

### **Public Access and Recreation**

**29. Comment:** “The Department failed to consider that the perpetual existence of these 15 camps limits the public value of the Long Pond CE by making these lands far less inviting to the general public as an area for outdoor recreational activities, especially hunters. The lessees of these camps will carve out their own hunting areas with tree stands, among other things. The existence of these 15 camps, which were supposed to be removed in their entirety, converts a public recreational asset and turns it into a defacto, exclusive private monopoly. In 1999, the state purchased blanket public recreational rights on this tract. The 15 camps were grandfathered for 15 years. Public recreation rights are now being permanently diminished and that is unacceptable.”

**30. Comment:** “The members of the hunting camps utilize a range of motor vehicles, which alienates or discourages other forms of recreation, such as hiking, biking, or primitive camping.

**Combined Response (29-30):** *Public recreation rights will not change because of this modification, except for the 15 one-acre camp envelopes around the 15 camps that are proposed to stay. The 15-acre camp envelopes represent about eight-hundredths of one-percent (0.08%) of the 18,950-acre property. These are not publicly owned lands. The Long Pond CE is private land that has public recreational rights because of the Conservation Easement. The easement is a public-private partnership between the State and the landowner. The hunting clubs will exercise recreational rights, including hunting, in the same manner as the public. There will be 22 fewer hunting camps on the property that before the easement. Based on DEC’s experience with several other*

*conservation easements that allow camp lessees, there are minimal conflicts between hunting camp lessees and the public.*

**31. Comment:** “Public access is so poor that camp owners will be able to pretty much keep it as their own private reserve.”

**Response:** *The road network used to access the property is rough in areas. If the lessees can drive into the area the public is able to also. Maintaining the roads is a joint responsibility of the Department and the landowner. The Department has repaired to the road system in the past and there are plans by the Department and the landowner to upgrade parts of the road system in the future.*

**32. Comment:** Perpetual private use curtails and conflicts with public recreational rights.

**33. Comment:** “The proposed modification to the Long Pond Conservation Easement will degrade public recreation rights by retaining 15 private camps spread throughout the tract in perpetuity. The proposed changes will weaken public recreational opportunities on the Long Pond Tract.”

**Combined Response (32-33):** *The Long Pond conservation easement tract is private land with certain public recreational rights purchased by the State. There will always be private uses occurring on these lands. The public recreational rights purchased as part of the easement will not change in any significant way as a result of this modification.*

**34. Comment:** “It is unconscionable for the State of New York to give private hunting clubs what in essence will be private use of public recreation lands, which use the public paid for with their hard-earned monies. Public recreational use does not mix well with private use. The additional 15 hunting clubs will facilitate the private use of the entire parcel and totally discourage public use. I have heard that hunting clubs who remain on State easement lands remove helpful public signage and otherwise actively discourage public use. The proposed changes will exacerbate conflicts which will not benefit the public. It will also give the hunting camp members greater access to hunting opportunities, to the detriment of other hunters.”

**Response:** *The Long Pond Conservation Easement is private land that has public recreational rights because of the Conservation Easement. The easement is a public-private partnership between the State and the landowner. Public recreation rights do not change because of this proposed modification, except for*

*the 15 one-acre camp envelopes around the 15 camps that are proposed to stay. The hunting clubs will continue to exercise recreational rights, including hunting, in the same manner as the public. Based on DEC's experience with other easements there are minimal conflicts between hunting camp lessees and the public.*

*As DEC's Conservation Easement program has evolved over the years, the Department has gained experience with hunting camps and their benefit to land management. We understand that the retention of traditional hunting camps on easement lands is consistent with conservation values, offering benefits such as reduced vandalism and providing cultural and economic benefits to the rural communities surrounding the property. These are important reasons why the Department supported this modification.*

- 35. Comment:** "Under the DEC proposal, there will now be 15 more "recreation camp envelopes" which will be posted to exclude the public, with all that implies user conflicts and demands upon Ranger time, time which would be far better spent saving lives and rescuing users of the Adirondack Forest Preserve."

**Response:** *Based on DEC's experience with other easements, public encroachment on the "recreation camp envelopes" has not been a problem and takes up a negligible amount of Forest Rangers time. There are over 18,900 acres not in camp envelopes for the public to explore and recreate on.*

- 36. Comment:** "The lease holders were supposed to remove the fifteen private camps years ago and I have been waiting for that removal so that I can visit that parcel without having to encounter the owners of the camps. The existence of the camps turns the entire area into a private holding. Through the creation of ATV trails, hunting stands, etc., the owners have created an unwelcoming atmosphere that keeps the visitors away. The camps are a blight, and the DEC should stand by the earlier agreement to remove the camps."

**Response:** *There would always be private camps on the property as the Conservation Easement allowed for the permanent retention of six of the larger camps in different sections of the property at the time the Conservation Easement was established in 1999. The number of camps is being reduced by 22, (from the original 43 to 21) – or a little more than half. The hunting clubs will exercise recreational rights, including hunting, in the same manner as the public.*

## Recreation Management Plan

**37. Comment:** “The LPCE makes reference to the creation of a Unit Management Plan (UMP) for this tract. In recent years, the DEC has chosen to develop Recreation Management Plans (RMPs) for conservation easement lands. To date, there is no RMP for the Long Pond Tract. It does not seem appropriate that major changes should be considered for a conservation easement tract where there is no completed RMP.”

**Response:** *The Department and Danzer Forestland, Inc. adopted the Long Pond Conservation Easement Recreation Management Plan (RMP) in 2006. The RMP is posted on the Department’s website at: [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/115466.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/115466.html).*

## Future Conservation Easement Modifications

**38. Comment:** “If significant easement terms such as these “sunset provisions” are altered with no clear benefit to lands within the Park, then this further puts at jeopardy public support for funding future conservation easement purchases.”

**Response:** *Per 6 NYCRR Part 592, conservation easement modifications must result in a net conservation benefit to the State of New York, Although Part 592 does not require the conservation benefit (parcel) be located inside the Adirondack Park, the Department decided to use the funds collected from the camp lessees by Danzer Forestland toward the purchase of approximately 950 acres of land along the South Branch of the Grass River. This acreage will be added to the Forest Preserve.*

## SEQR

**39. Comment:** “The adverse impacts of allowing the 15 camps to remain in place perpetually would be significant and that a positive declaration and EIS are required. (6NYCRR 617.7[c]).”

**Response:** *The easement modification is not for 15 new camps but for 15 camps that have been on the property for many years, to remain. These 15 camps will not result in any significant adverse impacts on the environment as there will no land clearing, new construction activities or other impacts to the property. In addition, the property is already leased to hunting clubs/camps that could remain in perpetuity when the conservation easement was established. The Department has classified the modification ‘project’ as a Type 1 Action and adopted a Negative Declaration on February 23, 2021. For a copy of the Negative Declaration, please contact us at: [conservationeasements@dec.ny.gov](mailto:conservationeasements@dec.ny.gov)*

## **Support Proposed Modification**

The following are comments received by the Department in support of the proposed conservation easement modification. The Department chose not to respond to comments in support of the modification.

### **Local Support**

- 40. NYS Conservation Fund Advisory Board:** The Conservation Fund Advisory Board is in favor of the proposed modification. They are in support of the “long-standing history of hunting and outdoor recreation.”
- 41. Senator Patty Ritchie:** Senator Ritchie is strongly endorsing the Departments proposed modification to allow the 15 camps to remain. Allowing the camps to remain will have numerous positive effects on local economy and businesses, conservation on the property, lessees are eyes and ears on the property, continuing long family traditions.
- 42. F&W Forestry Services, Inc.:** As the forest manager for the property, F&W believes that the proposed modification will be beneficial because it will allow long held traditions to continue. F&W also states that this modification will not affect the current rights of the public on the tract, it was noticed in the last five years this property gets very little public use especially for hunting. F&W believes that the camp lessees are the “best stewards of the land”, cleaning out culverts, picking up trash, reporting any potential violations, etc. Allowing the camps to remain is a critical part in managing the deer population for adequate forest regeneration.
- 43. Danzer Forestland Group Inc.:** The proposed modification is “truly a win for all stakeholders”. Allowing camp lessees to continue to stay on the property will continue to assist with eliminating any potential problems that may occur. The camp lessees “take care of the property as if it were their own, including minor road repairs, unplugging culverts and pipes, keeping approved trails open and reporting any violations they might witness regarding illegal activities.” Adding 300-acres to Whiskey Flats State Forest will be beneficial to the people of State of New York offering additional acreage for public use and enjoyment.
- 44. St. Lawrence Co. Sportsmen’s Federation:** “The efforts put forth by all involved to make this possible is appreciated.” The proposed modification will

allow the 15 camps to remain and will continue the “long time history of the hunting traditions and will help future generations”.

### **Economic Benefit**

- 45. Comment:** “The camps also have a number of positive economic impacts on surrounding rural communities, including supporting local businesses – something that is critical in an area of our state that suffers from a high unemployment rate.”
- 46. Comment:** “It is encouraging to see that the Department now recognizes that the hunting camps on easement lands are important economically, that sportsmen and women contribute in many ways to the conservation of resources on these lands and that the historical uses of the lands are an integral part of the North Country culture.”
- 47. Comment:** Allowing the camps to remain “...will also provide continued support to local businesses such as restaurants, service stations, retail stores, recreational dealers and the like. In these rural areas, small business owners need all the commerce they can find to maintain and support a viable business.”
- 48. Comment:** “The economic benefits for the local communities will continue... a critical component for these rural areas.”

### **Social and Cultural Tradition of Camps**

- 49. Comment:** “It continues the long-held tradition of hunting camps and outdoor recreation on the tract and the region itself.”
- 50. Comment:** “For many families across Northern New York, the annual traditions associated with membership in hunting clubs is an important part of their heritage and cultural life. As a hunter and member of a family that has proudly shared that tradition with my children and grandchildren, I felt it was important to find a solution that could benefit the hunting clubs, DEC and show Danzer Forestland that New York State is a place where companies can do business.”
- 51. Comment:** “It is a part of their family and their traditions. I’m also not sure if you know of all the families and the history of this property that will be affected by this easement”
- 52. Comment:** “Keeping the camps intact, helps to support the long-standing history of hunting and outdoor traditions so important to all sportsmen and women in

New York State. Having places to go, will create opportunities for young people to take part in these time-honored pursuits, and in turn continue these traditions in the future.”

**53. Comment:** “We love our family traditions and look forward to keeping the Adirondack hunting camp tradition alive forever.”

**54. Comment:** “I am the 5<sup>th</sup> generation in my family to hunt the Granshue tract in the Town of Colton. They started going to the woods since the 1920’s and tented then after a few years built a cabin that was started 90 years ago. My family still uses this cabin as it has not changed to preserve the history of the camp. I have taught my daughters and son how to shoot and hunt there and they are 6<sup>th</sup> generation, and it will be hosting my family’s 7<sup>th</sup> generation in the next few years. I think this is pretty cool and long-standing tradition. I have raised my children to keep the woods traditions alive and teach each new generation to love the woods and their great grandfathers did in hopes to keep traditions going to centuries to come.”

**55. Comment:** “These camps and my camp have been a part of my life and my families lives for so many years. Generations of my family call these woods and camps home. My siblings and I are the next generation to take care of the camps and the woods surrounding. I have been going to my camp in the Long Pond easement since I could walk; which is over 20 years now. I would do anything to support my camp and all the other camps around because of the group and new friends that became family over the years.”

**56. Comment:** “I am the President of the Birch Brook Club Inc. established in 1954, which is located on the Long Pond easement and have spent time in a hunting camp on Long Pond, formally known as the Granshue Tract, with family, friends and relatives every year since age thirteen and now at age 65, that equates to fifty-two years of involvement in hunting, fishing and trapping on these lands. The good times and lessons learned from my elders and exploring the woods as part of the hunting camp traditions will stay with me forever.”

**57. Comment:** “The people who have spent many years with their families at those camps, deserve this.”

**58. Comment:** “Please leave these 15 sites along for countless more family and friends memories.”

- 59. Comment:** “I agree with these modifications. I believe many of these camps have a lot of history and memories that date back generations to some who attend them avidly.”
- 60. Comment:** “By allowing 15 additional camps to be saved for family usage, the state would be saving many years of memories.”
- 61. Comment:** “As a camp we have over 60 years of history together on Gulf Brook some of our member’s travel from as far away as Virginia to spend time in those woods. We look forward to many more generations of family members and friends being able to go to that little camp in the woods that was built in 1941.”
- 62. Comment:** “I know one of the camp owners and he and his family have been going to their camp for over 50 years. It is a part of their family and their traditions.”
- 63. Comment:** “These camps have been the source of many days of family fun and great memories and hopefully they can stay where they belong.”
- 64. Comment:** “As a third-generation club member, our camp and the memories associated with it are a foundational part of our family and core friendships. My grandfather joining the club shortly after returning from WWII, my father in the early 80’s and myself in the early 2000’s. The bonds made at camp have transcended marriages and divorce and healed broken ties.”
- 65. Comment:** “We would just ask for your consideration of family history and love for the “the big woods” as this proposal moves forward.”
- 66. Comment:** “It continues the long held tradition of hunting camps and outdoor recreation on the tract and the region itself.”
- 67. Comment:** “This property has been a home to many outdoor families and friends for as many as three generations.”
- 68. Comment:** “Allowing the additional 15 camps in the amendment process to remain helps to support our long time history of the hunting traditions and will help future generations to benefit from these traditions. It will help younger generations learn conservation techniques and rules to follow to prolong our enjoyment of these traditions.”

**69. Comment:** “Hunting camps help to preserve the long history and heritage of the outdoors for future generations.”

### **Stewardship Benefits**

**70. Comment:** “The people who use those camps serve as the eyes and ears for the Department of Environmental Conservation, alerting them to a host of problems: vandalism, illegal dumping, timber theft, hunting out of season, eyes on the ground for invasive species, etc.”

**71. Comment:** “These camp occupants are the best stewards of the land and are the first to witness and report many potential issues such as illegal dumping, timber theft, fish and game law violations. They are really the eyes on the ground as they will frequent the property more than the landowner or land manager. The camp occupants are also the ones cleaning out culvert pipes and handle many issues with roads and flooding by beavers. I also know some camp occupants to clean up trash left by the general public.”

**72. Comment:** “The members look after the lands as if it was their own to help the landowner keep it safe from any wrong doing.”

**73. Comment:** “I can tell you these camps are enjoyed by very responsible woodsmen who act as land stewards.”

**74. Comment:** “With over 150 combined family years in the Gulf Brook Club we can attest to the excellent stewardship of the wilderness over that time period.”

**75. Comment:** “If finalized, it will keep people on the property regularly and assist with eliminating problems such as: illegal dumping, hunting out of season/poaching, fire damage, timber theft and vandalism.”

**76. Comment:** “Having lessees on forest properties, I believe, helps protect and sustain the land by hindering potential poaching, timber theft and vandalism.”

**77. Comment:** “Danzer owns the tract as a long term forest investment. A critical part is managing the deer herd to allow for adequate forest regeneration. From what I have witnessed as the forest manager over the last 5 years is that the property gets very little use by the public especially for hunting. It is my opinion that the public will not be able to assist in controlling deer numbers going forward. The camp occupants are an essential element in managing the deer herd to allow for the regeneration of the forest.”

### **Public Access and Recreation**

**78. Comment:** “The modification will not affect the current rights of the public on the tract.”

### **Net Conservation Benefit**

**79. Comment:** “In addition the net conservation benefit value of the region is increased with the purchase of 300 acres increasing the Whiskey Flats State Forest lands. That is pretty good value, Danzer purchases the rights to 15-1acre sites and NYS purchases 300 acres. So besides the benefit to the camp occupants, the general public gains use of 300 more acres.”