

# LAKE CHAMPLAIN ISLANDS MANAGEMENT COMPLEX

The [Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan](#) classifies Valcour and Schuyler Islands as Primitive. The [Adirondack Park Agency](#) has decided this restrictive classification is required to protect the rare plants and plant communities found on these islands. The [Lake Champlain Islands Management Complex](#) (LCIMC) [2017 Lake Champlain Islands Management Complex Unit Management Plan](#) (LCIMC UMP) outlines management practices for Valcour and Schuyler Islands as well as four other islands: Garden Island, Cole Island, Sheepshead Island and Signal Buoy. These four small islands, less than one acre of land surface each, are classified as Wild Forest.

Valcour Island, home to the Bluff Point Light House, has over two dozen designated campsites, contains many miles of hiking trails, and is the largest island in the LCIMC. An old stone camp with a slate roof, the Seton House, is also found on Valcour Island. After significant review and consultation, the LCIMC UMP calls for the Seton House to be left to naturally degrade.

The restored Bluff Point Lighthouse is the only lighthouse on Lake Champlain to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The lighthouse overlooks Valcour Bay, site of the 1776 Battle of Valcour Bay, the first naval battle of the Revolutionary War. The Bay itself is also a National Historic Landmark. The light continues to serve as a U.S. Coast Guard navigation aid. The [Clinton County Historical Association](#) (CCHA) owns a permanent easement that grants the organization the right to preserve the Bluff Point Light House and its ancillary structures on Valcour Island.

## KEY MANAGEMENT ACTIONS IN THE LCIMC UMP INCLUDE:

- Making the trail to the Bluff Point lighthouse accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Replacing the deteriorated boat dock near the lighthouse with one in Bullhead Bay, designed to be accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Closing eight primitive campsites and relocating another eight on Valcour Island to conform with the State Land Master Plan (maps found on pages 182 and 183 of the [LCIMC UMP](#));
- Removing picnic tables from Valcour and Schuyler Islands to conform with the State Land Master Plan; and
- Replacing cement fireplaces with stone fire rings on concrete bases at primitive tent sites, as needed.

The concrete fireplaces on Valcour Island are non-conforming structures in areas classified as Primitive. The LCIMC UMP allows for these non-conforming structures to degrade naturally. When they have degraded to the point that they need to be replaced, they will be replaced with stone fire rings. As the fireplaces degrade they will be slowly converted to stone fire rings

utilizing the concrete base of the existing fireplace to minimize removal costs and defer new construction costs.

DEC holds management of Valcour Island as a high priority. Implementation of the proposed UMP actions and maintenance of existing facilities on Valcour Island will be addressed as best as possible within the limits of current staffing and funding.

#### DOCUMENTS REFERENCED:

- Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan – [https://www.apa.ny.gov/State\\_Land/index.html](https://www.apa.ny.gov/State_Land/index.html)
- 2017 Lake Champlain Islands Management Complex Unit Management Plan – [https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands\\_forests\\_pdf/lcimcump.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/lcimcump.pdf)

#### RESOURCE LINKS:

- Lake Champlain Islands Management Complex – <https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/105779.html>
- Adirondack Park Agency – <https://www.apa.ny.gov/index.html>
- Clinton County Historical Association – <https://www.clintoncountyhistorical.org/>

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Many questions and concerns related to the management of Valcour Island can be answered by reviewing the [LCIMC UMP](#). If you have specific concerns or questions regarding the maintenance or management activities of Valcour Island that are not described in the LCIMC UMP, please contact the Valcour Island Caretaker or email [R5.UMP@dec.ny.gov](mailto:R5.UMP@dec.ny.gov).