

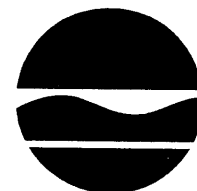
# New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

## Division of Lands and Forests, Region 5

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Alexander B. Grannis  
Commissioner

To Everyone Interested in the Perkins Clearing – Speculator Tree Farm CE:

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has begun the process of developing a Recreation Management Plan (RMP) for the Perkins Clearing – Speculator Tree Farm (PCSTF) and Oxbow Conservation Easement Area. As part of the process, the DEC planning team is seeking information and ideas from the public that will help the team in their task of providing public recreational access and use of the protected property within the framework of the conservation easement and reserved rights of the landowner.

The Perkins Clearing - Speculator Tree Farm and Oxbow areas encompass approximately 39,579 acres of conservation easement lands in the towns of Arietta, Lake Pleasant and Wells, Hamilton County. The conservation easement areas straddle the village of Speculator, Hamilton County. The area shares borders with the Siamese Ponds Wilderness, the Jessup River Wild Forest and the West Canada Lake Wilderness. Within the area, 31 miles of designated motor vehicle roads are accessible from State Route 30. The trailheads to Spruce Lake, Long Pond and Pillsbury Mountain are accessible from the designated road system. The interior of the area offers great opportunities for fishing, hunting and trapping in a working forest setting. Several of the area's ponds are excellent places for viewing wildlife.

The most popular recreational activity in the conservation easement area is hunting. The protected property supports a long-standing hunting tradition reflected by its 110 privately leased hunting camps. Prior to the conservation easement, the general public was required to obtain a permit by paying a small fee to the landowner in order to use the Speculator Tree Farm area. The working forest environment provides suitable habitat for many Adirondack game species, including white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse and wild turkey.

Parts of the Jessup and Kunjamuk Rivers within the conservation easement area attract kayakers and anglers. The headwaters of the area's streams, brooks and rivers provide opportunities for brook trout fishing. Many of the area's waters contain smallmouth bass and northern pike. Approximately 10 miles of the Kunjamuk River is designated '*scenic*', and approximately 9 miles of the Sacandaga River is designated '*recreational*' under New York's Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River System Act.

The Perkins Clearing – Speculator Tree Farm and Oxbow areas are privately-owned lands with state-purchased conservation easements. These conservation easement lands protect open space, public access, working forests and unique habitats. The State acquired the PCSTF and Oxbow areas as part of the 275,000 acres of conservation easement lands within the Adirondack Park acquired from the International Paper Company in 2004. In 2005, ownership of these lands, encumbered by the conservation easement, transferred to Lyme Adirondack Timberlands, LLC. Consultants of Upland Forestry Company assist the landowner with forest management, administration of recreational leases and conservation easement stewardship.

A Recreation Management Plan (RMP) is intended to assess the recreational resources present within a conservation easement, identify opportunities for recreational use and consider the ability of the resources and ecosystems to accommodate public use. A RMP considers many stakeholders, including the interests of the landowner and its lessees. As required by the easement, a RMP must be completed before new recreational facilities such as trails, tent sites

and parking areas can be constructed. The new RMP for the Perkins Clearing – Speculator Tree Farm and Oxbow areas will expand upon the approved interim RMP, which provided for the continuation of established recreational uses and the designation of campsites, roads, and existing trails. The RMP will be developed by DEC in consultation with the landowner, Lyme Adirondack Timberlands, LLC.

Management issues under consideration include snowmobile trails plus ski trails, horse trails, hiking trails, bike trails, camping and recreational access and use of interior roads, ponds and rivers. Management actions included in the RMP will be developed under consideration of potential impacts to adjoining Wild Forest and Wilderness areas. Upon completion of the recreational resource inventory and analysis, and a review of public comments, the PCSTFCE planning team will prepare a draft RMP. The draft plan will culminate in a series of management actions to be implemented over a five-year period. The completed draft plan will be distributed for public review and comment, and a public meeting to discuss the draft will be scheduled.

There are several ways for you to participate in the development of the Perkins Clearing – Speculator Tree Farm RMP. You can write to me, planning coordinator Marcus Riehl at New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 701 South Main Street, P. O. Box 1316, Northville, New York 12134. You can call me at (518) 863-4545 extension 3006 or send an e-mail message to [mbriehl@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:mbriehl@gw.dec.state.ny.us).

You may also attend a public open house that will be held on Friday, May 30, 2008 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the Lake Pleasant Central School, located ¼ mile east of the four-corners of State Routes 30 and 8, along the Elm Lake Road, in the village of Speculator. The open house will provide an opportunity for the public to share their thoughts and make suggestions regarding the management of the conservation easement lands and waters within the Perkins Clearing – Speculator Tree Farm and Oxbow areas. The event will begin at 7:00 p.m. with an opportunity for visitors to meet and talk informally with DEC staff beforehand. At 7:00 p.m., DEC staff will be introduced to the group, and there will be a short presentation about the state's conservation easement program and recreation management planning process, followed by a slide show highlighting the conservation easement area and describing management issues. At 8:00 p.m. the public will be invited to present comments to the group. After the presentation of formal comments, the public will have more time to meet with DEC staff one-on-one.

I look forward to your participation in the planning process.

Sincerely,



Marcus Riehl  
Forester