

Governor Rockefeller Approves Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan – Press Release from July 26, 1972

STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
GOVERNOR NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER

Ronald Maiorana, Press Secretary

518-GR 4-8418 (Albany); 212-JU 2-7030 (N.Y.C.)

(GOVERNOR-ADIRONDACK PLAN)

FOR RELEASE: A.M., WEDNESDAY JULY 26, 1972

Governor Rockefeller announced today his approval of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, thereby making the plan state policy to guide the management of more than 2,275,000 acres of state-owned lands in the Adirondack Park.

"In developing management guidelines which will allow full public enjoyment of our unique Adirondack lands," the Governor said, "while assuring strong protection for the fragile areas of the Adirondack Forest Preserve, the Adirondack Park Agency has done a great service for the people of the state."

"The members of the Adirondack Park Agency are to be commended for this outstanding planning effort," the Governor said, in a letter to Agency Chairman Richard W. Lawrence, Jr., of Elizabethtown. "You may be sure of my support in meeting the challenge to carry out the spirit and letter of the public land plan," the Governor said.

The plan was prepared by the Adirondack Park Agency in consultation with the Department of Environmental Conservation as provided for in the 1971 legislation creating the Agency. Public Hearings were held prior to completion of the plan and its submission to the Governor last June first.

The plan classifies state-owned lands within the Adirondack Park according to their characteristics and capability to withstand use.

The four broad categories and the acreage in each are:

Wilderness, 997,960 acres; Primitive, 75,670 acres; Canoe Area, 18,000 acres and the balance, approximately 1,150,000 acres in the Wild Forest Category.

In addition, the plan designates Intensive Use and Special Management areas, Wild and Scenic and Recreational Rivers and major Travel Corridors.

For each category, general guidelines for the management and use of the lands are presented. These guidelines provide the framework within which the Department of Environmental Conservation will prepare specific management plans for units of land classified to guide the development and management of state lands in the Adirondack Park.

Virtually all of the state owned lands within the Adirondack Park are protected under Article XIV, Section 1 of the State Constitution, the so-called "forever wild" clause. The plan does not permit any new land uses within the Park, and curtails or limits some existing uses in keeping with the physical and biological characteristics and other determinants of the classification system.

The strictest classifications of state land are designed to achieve and perpetuate a natural plant and animal community where man's influence is not apparent. The plan continues the prohibition against any and all public use of motor vehicles or equipment. Furthermore it reduces to an absolute minimum - for periodic essential services -- the official use of vehicles and motorized equipment.

While there are relatively few non-conforming structures, as defined by the plan, in the Wilderness area, those in existence are to be removed by December 31, 1975. Interior Ranger facilities will also be phased out in favor of facilities at key points at the edge of the Wilderness areas to provide needed supervision of public use.

Contemplated changes directly affecting the public are minimal. There will be no decrease in the 820 miles of foot trails in the Park, 520 miles of which are in the Wilderness area. Nor will the more than two million annual campers enjoying the public campsites be affected, because most of the sites are in the Intensive Use category specifically designed to provide such public services.

[following emphasis by Local Government Review Board]

There will be a reduction of about 20 miles of snowmobile trails now situated in Wilderness, but there will be no changes in the additional 930 miles in other land categories. Replacement of Wilderness Areas snowmobile trails being shut down is provided for in areas outside the Wilderness Primitive categories of land.

Members of the Adirondack Park Agency, in addition to Mr. Lawrence, are James R. Bird, Racquette Lake; Whitman Daniels, Delmar; Henry L. Diamond, Albany; William J. Foley, Utica; Peter S. Paine, Jr., New York City; Mary F. Prime, Lake Placid; Joseph P. Tonelli, New York City; Richard A. Wiebe, Albany.

Copies of the Master Plan are available from the Adirondack Park Agency, Box 99, Ray Brook, New York 12977.

A copy of the Governor's letter follows:

STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY

July 20, 1972

Dear Dick,

I hereby approve the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, submitted on June 1, 1972 pursuant to Section 807, Article 27 of the Executive Law.

The members of the Adirondack Park Agency are to be commended for this outstanding planning effort. In developing management guidelines which allow full public enjoyment of our unique Adirondack lands while assuring strong protection for the fragile areas of the Adirondack Forest Preserve, the Agency has done a great service for the people of the state.

Under the law, the Department of Environmental Conservation, in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency, will complete individual management plans to conform with the general guidelines and criteria set forth in the master plan. Commissioner Diamond has been requested to make adequate provision in the Department's annual budget request for implementation of the management practices which have been recommended.

You may be sure of my support in meeting the challenge to carry out the spirit and letter of the public land plan.

Sincerely,

(Signed) NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER

Mr. Richard W. Lawrence, Jr.
Chairman
Adirondack Park Agency
Box 99
Ray Brook, New York 12977