



**GREEN LAKES STATE PARK**  
**ADDITION MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
AN ADDENDUM TO THE 2011  
GREEN LAKES STATE PARK MASTER PLAN

Summary of Public Comments  
Collected During the Public Information Meeting at  
Fayetteville Village Hall on February 7, 2019 and Written  
Comments Received by March 7, 2019



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
Governor

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## **Introduction**

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) is preparing an Addition Management Plan for the recent acquisition of +/- 261 acres adjacent to Green Lakes State Park's southern and eastern boundaries. The Management Plan will help provide direction for the operation, recreational development, and natural resource protection of the new land for the next 10 - 15 years. The Management Plan will become an addendum to the Green Lakes State Park Master Plan (2011).

As part of public outreach while developing the management plan, OPRHP conducted a public information meeting at the Fayetteville Town Hall on Thursday, February 7, 2019. The public was invited to speak and make comments at this meeting. Written comments were also accepted at the meeting, by e-mail, and by postal mail until Thursday, March 7, 2019.

This document is a summary of the comments received at the public meeting and written comments received before the March 7, 2019 cut-off date. Comments were welcomed after the cut-off date with no guarantee that they would be included in this summary. These "late" comments will, however, receive equal consideration as the comments in this summary during the subsequent planning process.

The comments were classified by subject area. Similar comments were consolidated and all comments were edited to include the substantive portions. The subject areas are presented in alphabetical order with no indication of any prioritization.

## **Acquisitions**

- If other parcels are being considered for acquisition, include these in the planning process
- Not in support of acquiring properties if land will be underutilized
- Applaud the decision to purchase additional land for the property
- Access to new land exposes patrons to ticks and Lyme disease

## **Agriculture**

- Interest in maintaining farming to decrease chances deer, geese, etc. seek out the crop from adjacent family farms
- Continuing to rent the property to the local farmer helps the local animals and birds that clean up after the farmer to continue in this natural habitat
- Agricultural use will help the farmer survive in this economy and support the park with revenue
- Evaluate soils before removing any agricultural activity from the landscape; if soils are prime agricultural soils should consider allowing continued agriculture use through lease agreement or other mechanism
- Some limits such as strip farming and/or other Best Management Practices may be necessary
- Continued agricultural activity need not interfere with recreational activities slated for new acreage

## **Connectivity and Access**

- Concern property will be underutilized as new parcels don't connect well with existing trail system/parking areas
- Evaluate connectivity between all parcels
- Offsite access points typically degrade very quickly from public use creating unmanageable enforcement problem
- There is an access point off George Taylor Road that would create a very gradual, scenic access point for upper portions of the new parcel
- Creating a safe connection between the north and south parcels will be vital to maximizing use and enjoyment of the new land
- Patrons use neighborhoods to gain access to property and there is little to no oversight of park rules at that point of entry – many groups ride bicycles at night, walkers stay well beyond dusk

## **Disc-Golf**

- New disc golf course would be a low-cost way to provide many patrons enjoyment
- Fun, challenging course can be designed to fit the landscape with minimal disruption, tree removal
- Disc golf course at the original Green Lakes parcels is nearly 40 years old, almost historic in and of itself
- Activity has minimal to no impact to the natural environment
- Sport appeals to players of all ages and skill levels and can be played year round
- Disc golf infrastructure is low maintenance
- Local club has experience raising money to design and install courses to defray costs
- Disc golf courses can be designed to work in harmony with other planned uses for the property
- Sport is an inexpensive hobby accessible to any demographic
- Green Lakes is the perfect place to have a Championship caliber course
- Current course doesn't appeal to the avid disc golfer for things like leagues or competitive rounds; a pro-level course would attract tournaments and leagues which would certainly build revenue, bring lot of new faces

## **Facilities, General**

- Install picnic areas, water fountains/outside drinking faucets to supply water for visitors and pets
- Install electric charging stations for patrons; require fee and pre-registration to use amenity
- Provide more benches
- Create spaces and overlooks accessible for patrons using wheelchairs and other handicap carts
- Provide receptacles for the disposal of pet waste

## **Facilities, Recreation**

- Create reading garden for children to encourage outdoor imagining, play and creative fun
- Create outdoor amphitheater/entertainment area
- Consider an archery range
- Construct new cabins, camp sites
- Provide bicycle-rack stands
- Do not build another golf course, the current course is not fully utilized
- Providing an ice skating rink, area for sledding and tobogganing might be fun
- Many athletic events are held each year at Green Lakes
- Offer programming that does not require new infrastructure (chili cook-off, skip-jack, etc.)

## **Hunting**

- Do not permit hunting in any form at Green Lakes
- The newly acquired portion of land at Green Lakes would be an excellent area to include well-managed, monitored hunting options as majority of the park is already dedicated to non-hunting activities
- Safety:
  - Should be primary concern
  - Concerns about hunters with other recreation user groups and pets
  - Need to provide good public information, plenty of advanced notice for when hunting season in effect
  - New parcels are close to residences
  - Other recreationists will inadvertently interrupt hunts, causing unpleasantness and an unsafe condition
  - Allowing hunting will blur lines about what public use is permitted in which part of the park and lead to more violations and safety issues

- Skeptical that hunters and non-hunters can co-exist peacefully and safely on an area as small as the newly acquired land; huntable woods is relatively small compared to the open field areas, and size of the parcels would severely limit the number of hunters that could safely hunt
- Don't allow other recreation uses alongside hunting
- Need active hunting enforcement to keep people from entering adjacent private lands illegally
- No hunting related accidents in State Parks since 2005
- Given the size of property, and the anticipated density and popularity of use, would characterize hunting and multiuse trails to be entirely incompatible
- Hunting would propose good wildlife and habitat management in an area where such management is desperately needed to manage overabundance of nuisance wildlife (e.g. deer, geese)
- Hunting is not consistent with the existing character of the Park; Green Lakes is a special asset to the Central New York community that is focused solely on recreation
- Hunting as a recreational activity has been successful in other Central Region State Parks
- Public land is increasingly valuable hunting resource as private land dwindles
- Hunting is among the most popular forms of wildlife recreation in the state
- Charge additional fees for hunting
- Hunting is a safe and economically important outdoor pursuit that also supports wildlife conservation
- Hunting promotes family traditions and fosters an understanding and respect for the environment and its complexity
- Alternate hunting between north and south parcels to keep deer population in check
- Permits could be issued by first come first serve basis, (daily) lottery, or annual lottery prior to hunting season; also could create a permitting system
- Volunteers could help with hunting enforcement
- Interest in hunting by bow and/or modern firearms and/or muzzleloaders
- Allow small game and other bird hunting (e.g. goose, turkey, etc.); recognize value of allowing big game hunting
- Seasonal restrictions on hunting
- A number of hunters would be willing to hunt with bow or crossbow on particular days selected by the Park in order to reduce the deer overpopulation in the new property and even in the park proper
- Historically, the property has been hunted for years with bow, gun, and muzzleloader
- New parcel is isolated from the main body of the park and as such will not affect traditional park users
- Counterproductive to provide additional sanctuary to deer by not allowing hunting as many surrounding towns and villages are paying to have deer culled, permitting hunting would save local towns from paying for culling
- No other OPRHP properties in Onondaga County that allow hunting
- Crossbow hunting allows recreation opportunity for older patrons
- Management of the number of hunters simultaneously on the property could be considered but that would require the State to enact a labor-intensive effort to control
- Will lead to overuse and degradation from uncontrolled parking and use of three/four wheel vehicles
- 261 acres is inconsequential to the hunting community and hardly worth the enforcement responsibility
- DEC has done excellent job acquiring land throughout CNY to provide hunting acres
- Hunting causes great suffering and is cruel; let the animals have a peaceful habitat
- Require reporting system which will allow for the collection of data – to include but not limited to: number of deer harvested, adults antlered/antlerless, fawns male/female, disease, and hunting effort by each hunter (number of hours/days afield) – to better understand area populations
- Require hunters to register at a “check-in” booth

## ***Invasive Species***

- Program to remove phragmites from wetland near Route 5; create removal ‘demonstration’ plot
- Cooperate with neighbors to prevent spread of invasives
- There is swallow-wort on the property, under the pine/Norway spruce trees
- Spread of invasive species may be exacerbated by deer, but any trail construction crews or users of the area should be aware of it so it doesn’t spread further

## ***Management Plan, General***

- Newly acquired parcels should be utilized strictly for limited passive recreation and important environmental buffer with no parking, trail resources, or hunting/trapping
- Beautiful views from the hills on the new 261-acre addition
- This land be maintained in its current state, as a beautiful buffer area only; as natural and least intrusive as possible
- Would be great to see timeline for key activities, decisions
- Local/regional stakeholder opinions should be prioritized
- Keep lines of communication open
- Develop public subcommittees, with representation from major patron groups, to maximize local expert input
- Concern new property will be underutilized and dangerous; do not want to see new property under-monitored
- Green Lakes State Park has always been an unlimited source of enjoyment for the local area
- The new acreage is one of the highest elevations in the area and clearly visible from the golf course and the restaurant; development of the site would impair the vista and increase surface drainage and could negatively impact the two lakes
- There is a failing subterranean cistern on the acquired property that poses a safety hazard, should be properly managed

## ***Natural Resources***

- Massive deer populations on site:
  - Though we all love them, they are a BIG problem if their numbers are not kept in balance
  - Deer severely degrade the ecosystem and the chance for visitors to experience a vibrant and diverse natural place
  - Deer management would have positive effect on regrowth of area forests which show stress from overbrowsing
  - Overpopulation has created health and safety impacts (Lyme disease, vehicular impacts, etc.)
  - Reach out to sister agency (DEC) to inquire if park could employ the use of Deer Management Assistance Permits
  - Population out of balance because all predators have been eliminated
  - Collaborate with Village of Fayetteville to realize the Deer Management Plan
- Consider planting fields with:
  - American Chestnut, White Cedars, Mountain Ash, Hickory
  - Oaks or Mulberry would support wildlife
  - with newly developed blight-resistant species
  - native plants
- Involve arborist on-site
- Chestnut tree revival studies
- Large goose population on-site
- Wetland expected to expand
- Make hedge rows wider by planting new native vegetation at the existing forested border

- Research natural spring on property near Route 5
- Allowing land to return to succession may ruin viewsheds
- Create forestry management plan

### **Operations, General**

- Cutting trails more than once a month, not seasonally, will help mitigate deer tick populations
- Building new trails or facilities is only part of the cost, must maintain existing features
- Doesn't seem like current funds support maintenance of existing Park features
- Security concerns:
  - Employ drones for surveillance
  - Need more park patrol
  - Increase lighting
  - Install security cameras throughout the trails
  - New parcels are removed from main park
  - Identification cards issued by the park office or pre-registration for activities
  - Trespassing on adjacent private property
  - Install security phones, wi-fi
  - Highly recommend an electric bike for patrol
- How do you prove entry payment from one parcel to the next or use of the Empire Pass between parcels?
- Perceived difficulty in engaging with park management over the years
- Streamline process of approving a business partnering with the park for any number of purposes
- Provide brochures with rules concerning each recreation use or general park visitation
- Better communicate to public any needs and opportunities to serve the Park
- Partner with Syracuse University or utility companies to consider solar farm either on western uplands of main body of Green Lakes or on new acquisition, and keep solar array out of any viewsheds
- Parks' mission to provide safe and enjoyable recreational area, by not maintaining or mowing the trails does not provide a safe experience

### **Parking and Traffic**

- Increases in traffic and garbage at trailhead near the Brookside neighborhood may foretell impacts in Signal Hill neighborhood if new trailheads lack appropriate parking and trash receptacles
- Demand-based stoplight may be best intervention on roadway to allow safe crossing, but a costly one
- Construct separate parking lot for buses or agreement with private bus company
- Expanded parking is important to prevent undue parked-car congestion on roadways used by residents
- Parking at Manlius Center only has 8 – 10 parking spots and lot is often overflowing
- Request that any roads cut in have 'curb appeal'
- Safety concerns if parking were offered on Townsend Road
- Create parking lots with lake views
- Consider gravel parking lot(s) to mitigate runoff
- Provide off-street parking at the current bus turnaround
- In favor of a modestly sized parking lot on Pierson Road, small parking lot or expanded shoulder on George Taylor
- Reduce the speed limit on both Pierson and George Taylor Road to 30 mph
- Establishing "offsite" access/parking areas to the newly acquired land will create a logistical and regulatory challenge
- New parking areas should be set back from road, have landscape buffer
- No parking permitted on Pierson Road

- Eliminate section of George Taylor Road between Pierson and Route 5
- Pierson Road currently used for school bus, snowplow turnaround at entry gate to farm access road
- Create access to new acreage using other existing local roads
- Concerned about increasing traffic on Pierson Road if parking areas are concerned
- Concern crossing Route 5 to access new acreage
- Crosswalk across Route 5 would be insufficient because of the road's 55 mph speed limit
- Roads surrounding acreage are rudimentary at best and not the best place for vehicle access
- George Taylor Road provides residents direct access to their properties
- Concerns about parking, if provided and where
- Volume and duration of parking in residential neighborhoods that have become satellite parking lots for the Park is often excessive and inhibits the free use and enjoyment of our properties
- Consider potential runoff from new parking lots
- Hoping additional parking diverted from near front of homes within residential developments to protect private properties, and safety of children
- Noticed an increase in the use and traffic in the park

### **Partnerships**

- Build new, and continue existing, partnerships:
  - area residents (generally)
  - CNY DGA: Disc Golf Association
  - CNY DIRT: Dedicated Individuals for Responsible Trail-Use
  - Chittenango Polar Bears
  - Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
  - New York Interscholastic Cycling League
  - Oneida Mountain Bike Riders
  - Onondaga Cycling Club
  - Onondaga Co. Snowmobile Association
  - Signal Hill Homeowners' Association
  - South Shore Trail Blazers
  - SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
  - Syracuse University
  - Village of Fayetteville
- Partnership benefits:
  - Many partners have good track record working on regional trails (experience in developing trails with proper drainage, bridges) and resources (e.g. money, volunteers, hand tools) to build/maintain trails at lower cost to Parks
  - Many partners have experience raising funds for local philanthropies, providing youth outreach
- Create formal organization of Green Lakes volunteers
- Many area businesses are interested in doing more to donate to the park (in-kind services, trained operators of equipment, etc.)

### **Recreation, General**

- Diversifying recreational opportunities, experiences, and events in the Park will be a worthwhile benefit to the community and increase sales of the Empire Pass
- Have not experienced conflicts among user groups at Green Lakes
- Park patrons should adhere to accepted trail etiquette to avoid conflicts

- Allow drones, unmanned aerial vehicles, and model rockets to be flown on new acreage as they would not inhibit other activities and locations for use of drones in region currently is very limited; could create obstacle course
- Need to offer more varied recreational activities to give more young people a reason to stay in CNY and not leave the state
- There currently exist adequate recreation resources to accommodate the full range of users that come to the park and these resources are already tied together through existing parking and organized trail facilities
- Recreation opportunities (e.g. biking, hiking, etc.) are part of the solution to the national health care crisis
- There is significant acreage to the west in the main body of the park that is very underutilized and more than adequate to handle all the needs for recreation
- More recreationists provide eyes and ears to more parts of the park and to maintain a higher level of security in the park without increasing cost
- Park should clarify position on permissibility of certain recreational uses (sledding, etc.)

## **Signage**

- Install perimeter signage on all parcels, especially for hunting
- All trails should be well signed
- Signs for hunting should specify types of hunting allowed
- Signs should identify repercussions of illegal activities
- If you plan on installing “No Parking” signs on roads surrounding new acreage, do not put them where they would be in view of residential developments
- There are no gates, barriers or signage on new southern parcels to distinguish between State and private lands

## **Trails**

- Equestrian
  - Support horseback riding on the newly acquired land
  - Do not expect additional costs to be incurred by permitting horseback riding
  - Would be helpful to have a slightly larger, perhaps separated, parking area for horse trucks/trailers
  - Equestrian trails can be multi-use or separate
  - Several horse owners and riders live within vicinity of acquired land
- General
  - Support multiuse, purpose built, sustainable trails
  - Support non-motorized user access to new trails
  - Less trails, more natural areas
  - Snow grooming trails can yield great results in banding different user groups together for a common purpose and reward in the winter
  - Volunteers can help manage (e.g. snow grooming) and build trails usable by multiple groups
  - Marked, mapped, and maintained trails offer an element of safety compared to rogue ones
  - New trails could alleviate some of the traffic that ends up at the main park
  - The new parcels are not suited for trail expansion
  - Would be nice if other trails in the existing park could be developed by working with park personnel to create sustainable multiuse trails
  - Do not provide groomed trails, at least not on the golf course
  - Have never seen any conflicts between user groups
  - Many recreation groups already accustomed to sharing trails
  - If trails are designed properly (width), they could be used by all interested parties and eliminate the need for exclusive-use trails



- A loop trail, either independent of the core park or connecting the newly acquired parcel with the core park, should be a single track non-motorized multi-use trail
- Trails in the existing bird watch area are not maintained properly or mowed regularly which is unsafe
- New plantings will minimize vegetation lost from creating new trails
- Complete any foresting/deforesting/logging prior to creating new trails to avoid ruining trails or wasting volunteer time
- Designated trail crews for new acreage
- Mountain bikers, trail runners, and more ambitious hikers prefer that trails are more natural, less sanitized (i.e. trails of vehicle-width or with mulch)
- Reject the idea of closing the new property to non-hunters during hunting season as not all would-be park users will take note of signage, or enter the property on official trails
- Green Lakes is a wonderful park with world-class terrain for cross country trail running and mountain bike racing
  
- Hiking
  - Want more hiking trails
  - Hiking trails can be open in winter for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing
  
- Mountain Biking
  - Consider new mountain biking single-track trails, and/or loops at the new property and other Park areas
  - There are no other public spaces in the area to accommodate new mountain biking features, and space for mountain bike trails is available at the site
  - Network of mountain biking trails promotes better quality of life, makes Syracuse attractive place to live
  - Getting bikers off roadways with today's distracted drivers will save lives and create a useful safe environment
  - Trails built voluntarily by mountain bike community create little expense to the park
  - Do not appreciate rogue bike trails
  - Create a network to rival anything else available in the northeast
  - Green Lakes is a fun place to ride
  - Would be great to have a sanctioned "home" for mountain biking in the region
  - A mountain biking trail network has potential to draw in regional riders, create economic benefit for area
  - Single-track trails are suitable for multiple non-motorized user groups
  - Double-track trails are more appropriate so that multiple user groups can enjoy them
  - Double-track trail would allow access by emergency service vehicles
  - Narrow single-track trails would require non-bikers to step into grasses or shrubs that may host ticks
  - Bike trails should be open to all users: bird watchers, walkers and runners (skiers, snowshoers in winter)
  - Funding from local biking groups may be available to develop new single track trails at the site
  - Heartily support the Green Lakes Area Mountain Bike Plan (GLAMP) as proposed by CNY Dirt, which has significant community support; the plan would create extensive and unique trail experiences in the Park and extend to surrounding public lands
  - The local and regional mountain biking community can act as trail stewards, help plan and maintain new trails, help ensure that there is no damage to the surrounding ecosystem
  - Support new single-track trail network that can connect to surrounding areas and other public lands
  - Growing interest in more bike and multiuse trails, an extensive single track in Central New York would be very exciting for a growing number of riders in the region
  - CNY-DIRT will lead the effort to construct and maintain these trails, along with other volunteers
  - Unique trails provide an exciting yet calming and therapeutic experience
  - Mountain biking is a fun way to get children and adults interested in the outdoors

- Trails have been established without consent and not maintained or marked and they are still heavily used, including by runners and walkers
- Let's make the GLAMP projects happen!
- It is nice to have road-width trails that would allow motorized rescue, but we urge the promotion of parallel and winding single track where possible
- Mountain biking improves thinking skills and encourages a more active and healthy lifestyle
- Mountain biking is a way to provide access to beautiful scenery
- Trail design can be sustainable
- New, interesting trails keep potential trail users enthusiastic about getting out and exercising
- Local clubs support afterschool programs to teach value of the outdoors, exercise
- Activity can be enjoyed by all ages
- Lots of Fayetteville-Manlius citizens would be willing to help plan, build, and maintain trails
- Snow grooming is an excellent opportunity to expand off-road cycling into a year-round activity
- Mountain biking has exploded at the park over the last 5 years or so
- Marked, mapped and maintained trails provide an element of safety
  
- Skiing
  - Create designated, groomed trails
  - Create trails for XC-skiing only
  - Can maintain new ski trails using snowmobile with pull-behind groomer
  - Potential user conflict with snowmobilers
  - Coordinate with fat bikes to manage trails
  
- Snowmobiling
  - Connectivity:
    - New parcels could create connective corridor for snowmobiles, review existing mapped trails
    - Snowmobilers would benefit by the construction of a trail through the park and the new property to connect to Trail S53
    - Parcels could provide connectivity to points south in Onondaga and Madison county
  - Opposition to snowmobiling/motorized vehicles on site
  - Maintain the unofficial snowmobile trail through the new parcel to prevent sleds from using the OEC Canal
  - Snowmobile trails can be multiuse (cross-country skiers, snowshoers)
  - New trails could alleviate traffic on the Canal Trail
  - Community willing to help arrange access between the park and existing snowmobile trails, collaborate to advance snowmobiling
  - New trails could direct snowmobiles away from sensitive areas of the park and areas of incompatible uses
  - Local group owns/operates trail grooming equipment & currently benefits from OPRHP trail grant funding
  - Would not like to see snowmobiles using the entire trail system, however, they should be allowed to traverse the property if connecting to portions of the NYS Snowmobile Trail System