

Chapter 9 - Implementation

State and Federal Funding

The provision of recreation facilities and the protection of open space requires looking at the big picture of the State facilities and balancing the past, present and future of development throughout the Parks System. Looking at the past shows the many facilities and open spaces which were acquired years ago that are now worn out, not designed to meet today's needs or have

met and exceeded their life expectancy. In the present there is work to be done to manage the maintenance of existing facilities and resources. To prepare for the future, it is important to predict the need to: develop new facilities; protect and maintain natural, cultural and open space resources; and, meet present and future generations' needs for natural, cultural and open space resources. To achieve this balance of management a partnership of all segments of the population is required — individuals, interest groups, private industry, and all levels of government.

The federal and state governments are the primary sources for funding of

open space and recreation projects. In most cases, the State functions as the administering agent for federal funds. As might be expected, the need for funding generally exceeds the funds available. As the demand for open space and recreation resources increases, the resource base available to provide new opportunities is decreasing which is why it is imperative to search out funding opportunities for specific projects that traditionally may not have been considered.

The following table shows available funding programs for projects that help to implement the goals of SCORP.



Public Information Meeting at Saratoga Spa State Park, Saratoga County

Table 10 - Funding Sources

	Funding Programs	Agency	Eligibility					Action					Project Elements					
			State	Municipalities/ Local	Tribal	Non-Profit	Individual	Acquisition	Planning/Design	Construction	Maintenance	Historic Preservation	Trail	Marine	Wildlife/ Open Space Protection	Recreational Facilities	Historic Sites/ Cultural	Interpretive/ Education/Research
Federal	Land and Water Conservation Fund	NPS	x	x	x			x	x	x			x	x	x	x		
	SAFETEA-LU	FHWA																
	Recreation Trails Program	FHWA	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x					
	Transportation Enhancements	FHWA	x	x					x	x			x					x
	Sport Fish Restoration	FWS	x						x	x	x			x				
	Boating Infrastructure Grant Program	FHWA	x						x	x	x			x				x
	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality	FHWA	x	x					x	x	x		x					x
	Safe Routes to School	FHWA	x						x	x			x					x
	Highway Safety	NHTSA	x	x		x			x				x					x
	Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands	FHWA	x						x	x			x					
	Farm Bill 2002	NRCS	x	x	x	x	x	x							x			
	Forest Legacy Program	NRCS	x					x							x			
	Wetland and Conservation Reserve Programs	NRCS					x	x	x						x			
	Conservation of Private Grazing Lands Programs	NRCS					x								x			x
	Environmental Quality Incentives Program	NRCS					x								x			
	Farmland Protection Program	NRCS	x	x	x			x							x			
	Pittman-Robertson	FWS	x												x			x
	Recreational Boating Safety	USCG	x					x		x	x			x				
	Steps to a Healthier US Grants	CDC	x	x	x				x									x
	Special Recreation Program	DOE	x	x		x			x	x	x		x			x	x	x
	North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants	FWS		x		x	x	x							x			
	State Wildlife Grant Program	DEC	x												x			
	Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program	NOAA	x					x	x	x				x	x			
	Certified Local Government Grants Program	OPRHP		x					x			x	x				x	x
	Save America's Treasures Program	NPS	x	x	x	x							x				x	
Forest Stewardship Program	USDA	x				x					x			x				

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State	Environmental Protection Fund	Various	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	Parks Program	OPRHP	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
	Historic Preservation Program	OPRHP	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	
	Heritage Areas Program	OPRHP	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	
	Acquisition	OPRHP	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
	Zoos, Botanical Gardens, Aquariums	OPRHP	x	x		x								x			x	
	Snowmobile Trail Grant Program	OPRHP		x					x	x	x							
	Local Waterfront Revitalization Program	DOS		x					x	x			x	x	x			
	Hudson River Estuary Grant Program	DEC		x		x			x				x	x	x		x	
	Invasive Species Eradication Grant Program	DEC	x	x		x			x	x				x	x			
	Brownfield Opportunity Area	DOS/ DEC		x	x	x			x									
	Biodiversity Research and Stewardship	BRI	x			x	x										x	
	NYS Great Lakes Protection Fund	DEC		x			x		x	x				x	x			
	Habitat/Access Funding Grants	DEC		x		x	x		x	x	x				x			
Other	Hudson River Valley Greenway	HRVG		x		x			x	x			x			x	x	
	Architecture, Planning and Design	NYSICA		x		x			x							x		
	Capital Projects	NYSICA		x		x					x	x				x		
	Preserve New York Grant Program	PLNY		x		x			x							x		
	Lake Champlain Basin Program	LCBP	x	x		x			x	x				x	x		x	
	National Trails Fund	AHS				x							x					
Capacity Building Grants Program	PTNY				x			x										

USCG= United States Coast Guard
 FHWA= Federal Highway Administration
 DOE= Department of Education
 AHS= American Hiking Society
 HRVG= Hudson River Valley Greenway
 NPS= National Park Service
 FWS= US Fish and Wildlife Services
 DOS= Department of State
 PTNY= Parks and Trails New York

NRCS= Natural Resources Conservation Services
 OPRHP= Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
 NYSICA= New York State Council on the Arts
 PLNY= Preservation League of New York
 NOAA= National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 LCBP= Lake Champlain Basin Program
 USDA= US Department of Agriculture
 DEC= Department of Environmental Conservation
 BRI= Biodiversity Research Institute

Implementation

Grant Allocation

SCORP provides the foundation for the allocation of state and federal funds for recreation and open space projects. The policies, needs assessment, programs and initiatives are translated into criteria for evaluating projects in an objective manner. The SCORP is utilized to develop the rating systems for the Open Project Selection Process (OPSP) for LWCF projects and the EPF grants for municipal and not-for-profit projects, RTP grants and various acquisition categories consistent with the Conserving Open Space Plan.

SCORP helps guide the allocation of municipal and not-for-profit organization funds to local areas in greatest need and for facility types which are most deficient. The State's park and recreation priority rating system helps rank projects on a statewide basis, translating measurements of need and statements of policy to the maximum fulfillment of recreation wants and protection of natural assets. The SCORP's forecasts of need for recreation facilities combined with natural resource and recreation service objectives are reflected in the criteria comprising these systems. Factors include physical, recreational, social, economic, and environmental. The numeric ratings of the priority systems provide the method for comparative analysis of the many diverse projects evaluated. OPRHP administers grant programs that provide matching funds to municipalities and state agencies for the creation, operation, expansion, and rehabilitation of parks, facilities and programs. The importance of these initiatives requires that the most objective measures possible be used in the distribution of these funds. Many steps are taken in the SCORP assessment and policy process to assure meaningful public participation and technical evaluation.

Considerable public input is utilized in the development and revision of the State's rating systems. The LWCF, OPSP and the SCORP program provide sound bases for the priority rating systems. A strong public participation process was utilized in developing a system for the EPF and RTP grants.

Outreach and implementation occurs principally at the regional level. For the OPRHP grants, field representatives work with municipalities and not-for-profit organizations in developing applications and providing initial review. All applications receive statewide and compliance reviews. Joint meetings with regional field representatives and technical staff provide final review, ranking and approval, assuring full continuity from assessment and policy formulation to resource protection and program implementation.

Partnerships

Partnerships among governmental agencies and with the private sector, not-for-profit organizations and volunteers are an important tool in the acquisition, development, operations and maintenance of recreation facilities. Significant strides have been made to foster new partnerships and to provide guidance to agencies considering partnerships. The primary intent of partnerships is to assist public agencies in meeting their missions of providing quality and safe recreation while protecting the natural and cultural resources as well as improving the delivery of services.

First and foremost, it is important to maintain the resource stewardship mandate for resource agencies. Partnerships must be compatible with this mandate to maintain the integrity of the recreational and cultural system. The administering agency should not relinquish ownership, control or responsibility for

the protection of the land and facilities under its stewardship. Partnerships should be designed to supplement not supplant resources provided to an agency through their normal budgetary process.

Types of Partnerships

There are various types and forms of partnerships. These need to be tailored to the needs for a park, historic site or other recreation/open space area. The following is a listing of some of the types of partnerships:

Acquisitions - A not-for-profit organization, in some cases, has the ability to advance acquisitions with a landowner quicker than a governmental entity. The not-for-profit organization then holds the property until the governmental body can secure the funding and facilitate the acquisition process. In addition, a not-for-profit can function as a third party in the negotiations with a landowner.

Cooperative/Management Agreements - A public agency can enter into an agreement with not-for-profit groups where the group operates a property on the agency's behalf. The not-for-profit is then largely or solely responsible for all day-to-day operations and expenses for that facility. Agreements within OPRHP have terms of 5 to 20 years. Some agreements within OPRHP have been in place for more than 30 years.

Friends Groups - An agency can enter into an agreement with a not-for-profit organization to form Friends Groups to support a specific site.

Concession Agreements - These partnerships generally involve for-profit entities. An agency determines

that there is a need for a service and solicits proposals from the private sector. An objective is to encourage competition for private sector investment and operation of public service facilities.

Gifts - These are gifts in terms of land or facilities from the private sector to a governmental body.

Sponsor - It is common to have events conducted at public facilities sponsored by various organizations. Some events advance the goals of the organization while providing additional activities for the public.

Volunteers - In addition to the more formal arrangement with the not-for-profits, there are numerous informal arrangements with volunteers on public lands. These may range from local service organizations to Camper Assistance Programs.

Adopt a Resource Program - These are programs directed at a specific resource such as a beach or trail. The supporting groups would be responsible for the stewardship of that resource.

Research - These are partnerships with individuals, not-for-profit organizations, and institutions to conduct inventories and research on public lands to improve their stewardship, protection and management. The information is also valuable in the development of environmental education and interpretive programs.

various recreational, environmental and cultural organizations developed a set of public/private partnership guidelines. Although these are specific to OPRHP, they could apply to other public agencies. The guidelines flow from the Agency's mission statement to the goals and objectives identified in SCORP. The guidelines are:

- Partnership activities shall provide a public benefit consistent with the Agency's mission, goals and objectives.
- Partnership activities shall be compatible with the involved park and shall take into account the protection of the park's recreational, natural, historic and cultural resources.
- Partnership activities being considered for a specific park/historic site shall be evaluated within the context of ongoing management and planning for that property.
- Generally, partnership activities should be self-sufficient. Any increased maintenance and operational responsibility to the Agency shall be evaluated within the context of the Agency's budget and the enhanced delivery of services.
- Partnership activities shall be within the determined carrying capacity of parks/historic sites, their facilities and landscapes.
- Partnership activities shall provide reasonable public access, use and enjoyment.
- Partnership recognition shall be commensurate with the enhancement to the park and compatible with the park's resources.
- Partnership activities that increase scientific understanding of the ecological resources in State Parks for both stewardship and educational programs will be encouraged.

Guidelines

Guidelines for partnerships are important to ensure that the partnership is compatible with the mission of the agency and with the framework that governs the agency. OPRHP with the assistance of a working group comprised of representatives from

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Chapter 10 - Environmental Impacts



Environmental Review

New York's **State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR)** requires all state and local government agencies to consider environmental factors in agency decision-making processes along with social and economic factors. SEQR requires the agencies to balance the environmental impacts with social and economic factors when deciding to approve or undertake an **"action"**. The action in this case is the development and update of SCORP.

When an action is determined to have potentially significant adverse environmental impacts, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. The SEQR process uses an EIS to examine ways to avoid or reduce adverse environmental impacts related to a proposed action. The SEQR **decision-making process** encourages communication among government agencies, project sponsors and the general public.

The updated SCORP will guide future recreational planning, activities, and development. Its adoption and implementation has the potential for significant effects, thus it was determined that an EIS should be prepared. Since SCORP is a broad plan, a Generic EIS (GEIS), which is an assessment of the potential impacts of broad based or related groups of actions, is being prepared.

Chapter 10, together with the remaining chapters of SCORP, constitutes a draft GEIS. It discusses impacts and mitigation of impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the 2008 SCORP by OPRHP. Other chapters

provide detailed information on recreation resources and needs; natural, cultural, and historic resource settings; policies, actions, and implementation; and numerous ways in which the impacts of SCORP are mitigated. These other chapters are discussed briefly within the context of the policies and strategies. Many of the issues identified in this GEIS have been previously addressed in one or more earlier GEIS's for SCORP. This GEIS also references the 2006 Open Space Conservation Plan and GEIS prepared for it.

The environmental analysis of SCORP focuses on the adequacy, clarity, and appropriateness of the stated policies and action strategies that implement the vision of SCORP (Chapter 2). The GEIS is not intended to provide a comprehensive analysis of impacts of each program or project which may be undertaken pursuant to SCORP. It serves as a reference and sets forth the process for evaluation of future actions and related impacts, providing a sound environmental planning base. Existing evaluation and review processes are discussed in terms of assuring that resource protection is given appropriate consideration during planning and implementation of programs and activities under the SCORP "umbrella".

Specific recreational projects undertaken, funded or approved by state or local agencies pursuant to SCORP are subject to SEQR if the projects meet certain thresholds as defined by SEQR regulations. Some of these specific proposals will not have significant adverse effects on the environment. Other proposals that may have a significant adverse effect on the environment will require the preparation of EISs. The EIS process assures that an action to be undertaken will avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable. Through SEQR and

other existing review mechanisms such as permit processes, consideration of environmental factors is a part of all plans or specific actions undertaken to implement SCORP.

The Draft SCORP/GEIS is being made available for public review and will be the subject of a public hearing in accordance with the public review process of SEQR. Comments on the Draft SCORP/GEIS are welcome and will be incorporated and addressed in the Final SCORP/GEIS as part of the SEQR record, prior to adoption of SCORP.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting for SCORP consists of the people and the natural, recreational, scenic, historic and cultural resources of New York State, as well as social and economic characteristics. The resources potentially affected by SCORP include recreational areas, water resources, significant habitats, fish and wildlife, rare species, forests, agricultural areas, parklands, historic sites, archeological areas, scenic areas, and communities. The setting also includes the general public, park and recreation service providers and users.

Alternatives

Non-preparation of a plan is not a viable option since the state is required to prepare SCORP, both pursuant to State law and to maintain eligibility of federal funds under the LWCF. Failure by the State to implement SCORP would mean

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a lack of statewide guidance for the provision of recreation, and may result in the loss of needed opportunities for public access and outdoor recreation. Significant adverse impacts to the environment could occur without the guidance provided in the policies and strategies. A more limited scope would not capture the breadth of the outdoor recreational programs and opportunities within the state. SCORP as proposed provides a balance, providing the best information available on state and regional programs, facilities and actions related to outdoor recreation and open space resources.

Environmental Impacts and Mitigation

Each program and/or policy is briefly described and the implications as to the environmental impacts discussed along with general approaches to mitigation of potential adverse impacts.

Planning Process

The planning principles assure that recreation planning in the State considers natural as well as human resources. The planning process incorporates consideration of land and water resources and user impacts, and emphasizes the best use of available resources. Adequate information and analysis, coordination and citizen participation are keys to wise implementation of actions that protect resources.

Policies and Strategies

The policy framework in Chapter 2 provides balance in project evaluation to for adequate resource protection. To maximize the social and economic benefits associated with providing recreation while minimizing adverse impacts to the resource, planning for recreation programming and development of recreational facilities must consider the entire set of SCORP policy statements.

The SCORP policies and action strategies are comprehensive and reflect the guiding principle that OPRHP conserve, protect and enhance natural, ecological, historic, cultural and recreation resources and provide public access in a manner that will protect them for future generations. Assurance that the entire set of SCORP policies and action strategies is applied to development of recreational programs and facilities is provided through use of grant allocation criteria, planning processes and public participation, and environmental review procedures. Resource protection policies are continually balanced with other policies to achieve optimal levels of recreational facilities and programs in view of the capability of resources to support use. Each time that SCORP is updated, suggestions for policy and strategy additions or revisions are sought from agencies and the public. This process assures that the policies and strategies continue to be responsive to recreational needs and resource protection.

Review processes by which more detailed plans and projects are developed and evaluated should serve to minimize, if not eliminate, adverse effects possibly associated with development

of recreational facilities. Site specific reviews will assure consistency with SCORP and projects which enhance or are compatible with natural and cultural resources.

Consistency of SCORP policies with New York's Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program and its coastal policies is discussed in Chapter 10 within the Policy Framework. Overall, the policies and strategies of SCORP are consistent with and may advance coastal policies, including those related to development, public access and recreation.

Stewardship of the state's natural, cultural and recreational resources is essential to protect them. Through stewardship programs described in SCORP, potential adverse impacts of recreational development and use are minimized and consistency with coastal policies is assured.

Resource Planning for the State Park System

SCORP provides the basis for recreation planning in the State. Successive levels of planning, to specific facility plans, analyze natural, cultural and recreation resources and evaluate alternative management strategies. Environmental review is an important component of the planning process. Individual project planning also incorporates environmental review requirements.

Through the framework of SEQ, guidance is provided regarding

mitigation measures in undertaking projects, such as providing erosion and sediment controls, protecting rare plants or animals, or for restoration of disturbed areas.

Implementation

Policies, needs assessment and program initiatives are translated into criteria for evaluating projects in an objective manner. SCORP guides allocation of funds to areas in greatest need, along with the extent to which they further SCORP policy directions. The priority rating system is revised on an annual basis to reflect changing priorities and initiatives within the context of the most recent SCORP policies and actions. The priority system assures that consideration is given to an appropriate balance of SCORP policies when evaluating and ranking applications for federal and state assistance to acquire or develop recreation or open space resources. Protection of ecological, historical and open space resources are important factors.

Cumulative Impacts

The primary effect of the 2008 SCORP is to promote the policies identified in Chapter 2. These relate to such aspects as increasing coordination; preserving resources, expanding water recreation, recreationways and interpretive programs; and improving maintenance, operation, research and management.

Addressing recreational needs will have cost and environmental implications. Some of the types of needed recreation facilities will have greater

impacts on the environment than others. Public health and safety considerations must be incorporated into planning for recreational opportunities.

The cumulative effects of applying the policies and strategies of SCORP systematically will be substantially beneficial. Existing recreational services to the public will be maintained while at the same time protection of natural and cultural resources will be ensured. The implementation of recreational and resource protection programs through the SCORP policies substantially enhances the physical and psychological well being - the quality of life - of the residents of the State.

Furthering the quality and quantity of recreational services and programs has substantial beneficial effects on economic activity, as well as preservation and recreation opportunities, within affected communities. Identification of the need for recreational services and facilities is based primarily on existing population and on growth projections. Most projected recreational development will occur in response to growth, rather than such development inducing growth.

Implementation of the programs which are guided by SCORP will result in irreversible and irretrievable commitments of time, funds, and energy and planning resources. Overall the benefits of preservation, stewardship and providing recreation outweigh these commitments. The policies stated in SCORP will not result in any significant increase in energy consumption associated with recreation activities. Several of the policies and action strategies will promote reduction in energy consumption by recreation providers and users.

Since SCORP is a general plan, identification of program-specific or site-specific adverse impacts, including those which are unavoidable, will be

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accomplished during future planning and environmental review of programs and projects. Although specific adverse impacts associated with the application of SCORP policies cannot be identified, adverse impacts may arise when one or a group of SCORP policies are given more emphasis over other policies. Also, while implementation of SCORP policies and objectives will generally promote coastal policies, overemphasis of particular SCORP policies can in turn create potential conflicts with coastal policies. Minimizing the chance that policies conflict with one another is accomplished through planning, environmental review, public participation and priority rating systems.

New policies and initiatives within this SCORP, including additional planning efforts, ecosystem-based management and sustainability, will facilitate proper balancing of the SCORP policies and advance environmentally sensitive recreational development and use.

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DEC

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State University of New York
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Region 2
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