



## **2005 State Land Classification & Reclassification**

### **Description of Action:**

Proposed classification or reclassification of State lands within the Adirondack Park. Action involves 70 State land classification proposals totaling approximately 47,575 acres and 8 potential State land reclassifications totaling an estimated 26,308 acres. Total acreage involved in the project is approximately 73,880 acres. Three alternatives are discussed for proposed classification of the lands to the east and adjacent to the Carry Falls Reservoir Areas in St. Lawrence County. The action involves lands in nine counties including: Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties.

The action only involves the classification or reclassification of State lands according to the provisions of the Adirondack Park State Land Master plan. The action does not authorize the development of new structures or improvements without prior SEQRA assessment by the Department of Environmental Conservation and/or the Adirondack Park Agency. A summary table and maps outline the scope of all the proposals within this classification package. In addition, the following more detailed narrative is provided regarding a number of the larger more significant classification proposals included in the action. The narrative descriptions are categorized according to the DEC Region and county. The page numbers provided refer to the pages of the attached map package.

### **Region 5 - Franklin County Lands**

#### **Madawaska Flow Parcel (page 17)**

This parcel was acquired in 1999 as part of the Champion land acquisition, and contains 8,365 +/- acres. The boundaries of this parcel contain 10 pre-existing Forest Preserve wild forest parcels that are part of the Debar Mountain Wild Forest. Over three miles of old railroad bed runs north to south through this parcel. The railroad bed is 100' wide and privately owned by a hunting club. There are camps along the corridor and year-round motor vehicle use including cars, trucks, ATVs and snowmobiles. The Blue Mountain Road, a seasonal town highway, also runs five miles southeast/northwest through this parcel. Motor vehicle traffic is year round and includes cars, trucks, ATVs and snowmobiles. There are also three roads through this parcel,

running east/west, to which the Forest Land Group, a neighboring landowner, has a permanent easement for motor vehicle access. The main branch of the St. Regis River, which flows through the western portion of this parcel, is currently protected as a scenic river under the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act.

Proposed Classification: Wild Forest, to become part of the Debar Mountain Wild Forest.

**Main Branch St. Regis River Parcel (page 16)**

This parcel was acquired in 1999 as part of the Champion land acquisition, and contains 6,000 +/- acres. The boundaries of this unit contain one pre-existing Forest Preserve parcel that is part of the Debar Mountain Wild Forest. Approximately two miles of boundary is shared with a Forest Preserve parcel to the west, also part of the Debar Mountain Wild Forest.

Approximately six miles of the old railroad bed runs north/south through this parcel. The bed is 100' wide, privately owned and has a hunting complex located on it. Motor vehicle use is year round and includes cars, trucks, ATVs and snowmobiles. Motor boat use occurs on this section of the river, and there is a boat launch located on the river near the community of Santa Clara. A state highway (Route 458) and two town roads (Red Tavern Road and Dexter Road) cross this parcel in an east/west direction. Motor vehicle traffic is year round, and on the town roads includes cars, trucks, ATVs and snowmobile use. The portion of the main branch of the St. Regis River that flows through this parcel is currently protected as a recreational river under the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act.

Proposed Classification: Wild Forest, to become part of the Debar Mountain Wild Forest.

**East Branch St. Regis River Parcel (page 16)**

This parcel was acquired in 1999 as part of the Champion land acquisition, and contains 3,177 +/- acres. The Red Tavern Road forms the north boundary of this parcel. There are several winter logging roads on the parcel but no public roads. Prior to state ownership the lease holders used motor boats on the river for hunting and fishing purposes. This use continues today. The portion of the East Branch flowing through this parcel is protected as a scenic river under the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act.

Proposed Classification: Wild Forest, to become part of the Debar Mountain Wild Forest OR Primitive, creating a new unit.

**Deer River Parcel (page 16)**

This parcel was acquired in 1999 as part of the Champion land acquisition, and contains 1,830 +/- acres. The Red Tavern Road forms part of the south boundary and the Park's Blue Line forms the north boundary of this parcel. There are several winter logging roads on this parcel, but no public roads. The portion of the Deer River flowing through this parcel is protected as a scenic river under the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act.

Proposed Classification: Primitive, creating a new unit.

**Regions 5 and 6 - Hamilton and St. Lawrence County Lands**

**Round Lake Tract (page 24)**

Description: This parcel will be acquired in 2005 from TNC, and includes 5,836 +/- acres. This land lies between the William C. Whitney Wilderness to the south and Horseshoe Lake Wild Forest to the north. This parcel provides a canoe route from Little Tupper Lake to Tupper Lake.

Proposed Classification: Wilderness, to become part of the Bog River Wilderness. Part of the Horseshoe Lake Wild Forest, the Hitchens Pond Primitive Area, and the Round Lake parcel will form the new wilderness area which will encompass +/- 11,000 acres.

The boundaries of this new area will be (approximately) the Remsen-Lake Placid Railroad to the west, the Sabbatis Road to the south, the Bog River to the north and Route 30 on the east. A primitive corridor will be necessary for a snowmobile trail from Long Lake to the railroad.

**Regions 5 - Hamilton County Lands**

**Bog Lake/Clear Pond Parcel (page 23)**

Description: This parcel will be acquired in 2005 from TNC, and includes 1,100 +/- acres. This land lies between Lowes Lake to the north and the Remsen-Lake Placid Railroad to the south. The parcel is bordered on the north and south by the Five Ponds Wilderness.

Proposed Classification: Wilderness, to become part of the Five Ponds Wilderness. A primitive corridor will be necessary for an IP right-of-way through the parcel.

**Region 6 - Lewis and Herkimer County Lands**

**Greggs Lake Parcel (Page 27)**

This 595+/- acre parcel was acquired in 1999 as part of the Champion land acquisition. The property is located in the Town of Webb, Herkimer County and is within the Pepper Box Wilderness Area. It is a remote parcel, approximately 14 miles from the nearest town highway to this parcel by way of the Bear Pond Road, Tied Lake Road and private ROW's. Private lands make up the entire western boundary as well as a small portion of the eastern boundary. The general character of the property is forested with numerous streams and wetlands as well as the 18 acre Greggs Lake.

Prior to State acquisition the area was extensively logged and remnants of old gravel roads are evident on the property. There are two hunting camps located on the property that were allowed to remain as part of the purchase agreement and must be removed by June 2004. (These structures are currently in the process of being removed.)

The Tied Lake Primitive Corridor crosses the extreme northwest corner of this property, providing access from the Bear Pond Road to the Gregg Lake parcel as well as to the neighboring privately owned parcel.

Proposed Classification: Wilderness; to become part of the Pepperbox Wilderness.

**Spring Pond and Triangle Club Parcels (Page 27)**

The parcels were acquired as part of the Champion acquisition in 1999, and consist of two rectangular properties which corner on one another and contain 848+/- acres. They are located in the Town of Webb, Herkimer County. The northerly Triangle Club parcel is bordered on the north and east by the Pepperbox Wilderness Area, on the south by Forest Preserve currently classified as Wild Forest and on the west by the Lewis/Herkimer County line and the Croghan easement lands. It also contains a ROW from the Croghan easement lands east through the southern third of the parcel into the Pepperbox Wilderness to a private inholding that extends north and east from the northeast corner of the Spring Pond parcel. The southerly Spring Pond parcel is entirely surrounded by the Pepperbox Wilderness with the exception of a short segment of the west line which is bounded by existing Wild Forest. This parcel also has a ROW and road for access that forms the southern boundary of the existing adjacent WF parcel, as well as a hunting camp that was allowed to remain as part of the purchase agreement. This camp must be removed by June 2004.

Proposed Classification: Wilderness; to become part of the Pepperbox Wilderness.

**Sand Pond Parcel (Page 27)**

This parcel was acquired in 1999 as part of the Champion land acquisition, and contains 302+/- acres. The parcel is located in the Town of Watson in Lewis County, several miles by gravel forest management roads across the Croghan Tract. The Lewis/Herkimer County line forms the eastern boundary while the center line of roads on the Croghan Tract easement form the rest of the boundary of this semi-circular parcel. The parcel essentially surrounds Sand Pond on three sides as well as some existing Forest Preserve lands east of Sand Pond that are classified Wild Forest. In locations where the center-line of roads are the boundary of the Forest Preserve, a 50-foot easement for the road and its associated maintenance is held by the underlying fee owner of the Croghan Tract easement.

Proposed Classification: Wilderness, to become part of the Pepperbox Wilderness.

**Reclassification of existing Wild Forest parcels between the Sand Pond, Triangle Club and Spring Pond Parcels, and in Lot 22 of Watson's East Triangle (Page 27)**

The three parcels contain approximately 300 acres and are adjacent to the existing Pepperbox Wilderness. They are located in the Town of Croghan in Lewis County as well as the Town of Webb in Herkimer County. They are older Forest Preserve parcels which have been undisturbed for decades and share the character of the adjacent Wilderness area. The parcel adjacent to the unclassified Spring Pond parcel contains a ROW and road that provides access to the Spring Pond parcel.

Proposed reclassification: Wilderness; to become part of the Pepperbox Wilderness.

**West Branch Oswegatchie River Parcel (Page 27)**

The 1,650+/- acre parcel was acquired as part of the 1999 Champion land acquisition and is the largest fee parcel acquired in the Croghan area. The West Branch of the Oswegatchie River flows through the middle of the parcel. The river is classified "Recreational" under the NYS Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act. A dam on the river within the bounds of this parcel forms the 69-acre Mud Pond. The majority of the French Ponds are also included in this parcel. The parcel is bordered on the north by the Lassiter Tract easement lands, on the east and west by privately owned forest lands, and on the south by the Croghan Tract easement lands. The south boundary is delineated by a

town road and the parcel is also bisected by another town road. Portions of the parcel adjoining the town roads are interspersed with private parcels, many of which are developed with seasonal and permanent homes. Two existing snowmobile trails exist on the parcel, one running along the eastern boundary, the other paralleling the north shore of the river and connecting to trails on the Lassiter Easement

Proposed Classification: Wild Forest; to become part of Watson's East Triangle Wild Forest.

**Region 6 - St. Lawrence County Lands**

**Raquette River Parcels North of Carry Falls Reservoir (Page 29)**

The Niagara Mohawk parcels north of Carry Falls Reservoir encompass approximately 966 acres and are comprised of 7 parcels that range in size from 13 to 406 acres. These parcels were acquired in 2001. Most are adjacent to the reservoirs on the Raquette River, but only the Raquette Flats parcel is adjacent to existing Forest Preserve lands. All of these parcels are mostly forested and many have had informal public use over the years of ownership by NiMo. Except for the Raquette Flats parcel all are surrounded by privately owned lands. The Stark parcel has a 200' wide strip through the parcel reserved by NiMo for transmission line and road purposes. The Whispering Pines parcel has a 100' wide strip reserved through it to provide access for road purposes to a private holding on a point of land between Blake Falls Reservoir and the unclassified lands.

NiMo Parcels North of Carry Falls Reservoir

Name of Parcel	Acreege (+/-)	Town	Notes
Garlough	21	Colton	West side Stark Falls Reservoir
Stark	406	Colton	West side Stark Falls Reservoir
Blake Falls Bypass	83	Parishville	East side Blake Falls Reservoir near bypass
Whispering Pines	280	Parishville	East side Blake Falls Reservoir
Stark Tailrace	13	Parishville, Colton	Between Stark and Blake Falls Reservoir
West Boundary	132	Parishville	North of Five Falls, not adjacent to the reservoir
Raquette Flats	31	Parishville	White Hill WF on 3 sides; Five Falls Reservoir

Proposed Classification: Wild Forest; West Boundary and Raquette Flats to become part of White Hill Wild Forest, the remainder to become part of the new Raquette Reservoirs Wild Forest.

**Dead Creek Parcel (Page 31)**

The parcel was donated as a gift to DEC by Niagara Mohawk in 1999. The entire gift was a parcel of about 3,360 acres, of which a center strip of about 1,120 acres encompassing mostly wetlands along Dead Creek was a fee gift, with strips to the north and south of about 1000 acres each gifted as easements. There is an old town road that crosses each of these strips that provides a legal ROW to the Forest Preserve parcel. This same route is used for a snowmobile trail in the winter. The east end of the parcel is almost adjacent to NYS Route 3, however there is a strip of private land that separates this parcel from Route 3 and the unclassified State lands to the east of Route 3. This parcel is accessible by canoe on Dead Creek from Route 3 but the creek is not navigable for very far.

Proposed Classification: Wild Forest; to become part of Cranberry or Horseshoe Lake Wild Forest.

**Carry Falls and Raquette River Parcels (pages 30 and 31)**

The unclassified State lands discussed in this section include lands acquired from Niagara Mohawk adjacent to Carry Falls Reservoir and lands acquired from International Paper Co. and the Conservation Fund along the Raquette River in the Town of Piercefield.

The lands acquired from NiMo include the first six parcels listed below. All except the Jordan River South and the Lassiter parcel are immediately adjacent to the Carry Falls Reservoir, although they all are separated from the shore of the Reservoir by a narrow strip of land owned by Reliant Power, a successor to NiMo. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) requires a hydro company to retain a strip of land around their reservoirs to protect their ability to manage the water levels in the reservoir. The boundary line that establishes this strip of land is referred to as the FERC line.

The table below lists the specifics about these parcels including their location relative to existing Forest Preserve lands. All of the parcels abut at least one Forest Preserve parcel so they add to the existing core of State lands on both sides of the river.

NiMo Lands Adjacent to Carry Falls Reservoir; IP and CF Lands

Name of Parcel	Acreage (+/-)	Town	Notes
Jordan River South	75	Colton	East side of Carry Falls Res. but not on it; NW corner of Block 31, Township 8; rest of Block 31 is existing Forest Preserve
Jordan River North	261	Colton	East side Carry Falls Reservoir; borders WF on the east, private Jordan River Club on south
Hollywood	402	Colton	East side Carry Falls Reservoir; borders WF on the south, Lassiter private holding on east; east boundary defined by contour line
Parmeter (Pending)	205	Colton	West side of Carry Falls Reservoir; to include part of Kayem parcel; borders WF on south
Lassiter	421	Hopkinton	East of Carry Falls Res. but not on it; all land in Blocks # 8 and 16 of Township 9 below contour line at 1520'; rest of block is already Forest Preserve
Cold Brook	361	Colton	East side Carry Falls Reservoir; borders WF on the south, Lassiter Tract easement on east; east boundary defined by contour line
Raquette River (IP and CF lands)	2,685	Piercefield	Approximately 500' on either side of the Raquette from below the dam at Piercefield west to the town line; adjacent to existing Wild Forest at west end

The existing Raquette-Boreal Wild Forest lands amount to about 13,250 acres on the north and east side of the Raquette, with an additional couple hundred acres on the west side between the river and Rt. 56. The land east of the river has no public access other than by crossing the river or the reservoir. The existing Forest Preserve includes very old parcels as well as

approximately 3,600 acres acquired from Lassiter Inc. in 1989. There are significant areas of low elevation boreal forest on these lands as well as adjacent private lands. The Jordan River runs through both classified and unclassified Forest Preserve lands and is classified as "Scenic" under the NYS Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act. It flows through significant areas of boreal forest and has the character of a northern Canadian river.

Proposed classification: Three alternatives are proposed for consideration and are depicted in the attached map package on pages 34-36. The existing conditions in this area are depicted in the map found on page 30:

Alternative A (page 34) proposes the use of the existing Lassiter Main Haul Road as a boundary between a newly created Raquette-Jordan Boreal Primitive Area to east of the road and a new Raquette River Wild Forest unit to the west. The Lassiter Haul Road would permit snowmobile trail use to occur and facilitate a trail connection to private lands to the north. The State lands to the east of the road would be classified as Primitive and managed for its wilderness qualities. To the west of the road the lands would be managed as a Wild Forest.

The Alternative B (page 35) proposal includes the classification of all unclassified lands to the west and north of the Lassiter Haul Road to the Primitive classification. The lands of the existing Raquette-Boreal Wild Forest would be reclassified to the primitive classification as well. A reserved access right on the Lassiter Haul Road would be in effect as long as the reserved right for the road was retained on State lands.

The Alternative C (page 36) proposal delineates the classification of all newly acquired lands to Wild Forest classification which then would become part of the existing Raquette-Boreal Wild Forest unit. The Lassiter Haul Road could remain as a conforming use if so designated in the adopted unit management plan.

**Tooley Pond and South Branch of the Grass River (page 33)**

The Tooley Pond parcel is approximately 6,100 acres and was acquired in 1999 from Champion International via the Conservation Fund. With the exception of lands around Tooley Pond, this parcel is generally a strip of land 1/4 mile or less wide along the South Branch of the Grasse River. A working forest easement of approximately 26,000 acres has been acquired on either side of the fee strip along the river. The Forest Preserve lands are not contiguous to any other previously existing forest preserve parcels.

The fee parcel is split into two sections based on their proximity to the Tooley Pond Road, the character of the river, and its navigability. The Tooley Pond Road crosses the river at New Bridge about half-way through the property. Upstream of New Bridge the land is largely undeveloped. The Spruce Mountain Road and bridge provides access to the upstream piece, both for public use and for access to the fee and easement lands north of the river. The upstream section of river is navigable by canoe and has one falls and a number of rapids. Downstream of New Bridge the Tooley Pond Road closely follows the river.

A number of private in-holdings exist within the fee strip along the river. The Twin Falls Club owns about 20 acres on the north side of the river next to Flat Rock Falls and includes a small cluster of buildings. There are also two small holdings between the river and the road just below Twin Falls, one with a cabin that is visible from the road but not the river. Both of these in-holdings are downstream of New Bridge. The major in-holding is a fee strip owned by Niagara Mohawk described as 100' either side of the high water mark of the river for the full length of the parcel.

An interim management plan has been developed for these lands which includes the development of a number of facilities. Four small parking areas have been developed, a kiosk is installed at Tooley Pond, a number of campsites and carries are designated on the section of the river upstream of New Bridge, a trail has been developed to Tooley Pond Mountain and several snowmobile trails have been designated as part of this interim plan.

Proposed classification: Wild Forest; to become part of the Grasse River Wild Forest.

**Grasse River Railroad (page 32)**

The Grasse River Railroad Tract is approximately 120 acres; 66 feet wide and about 12 miles long acquired as two separate but contiguous parcels. The first lineal parcel begins at the hamlet of Conifer and extend northwest across the Massawepie Mire and NYS Rt. 3 to the South Branch of the Grasse River at the site of a former bridge. The second parcel begins at the old bridge site at South Branch and extends nearly to Silver Lake. A third segment of the former railroad bed is privately owned; however, the State has acquired an easement for snowmobile use along its length.

Proposed classification: Wild Forest; to become part of the Cranberry Lake Wild Forest.