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DEC RELEASES DRAFT CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR ADIRONDACK RAIL TRAIL

Municipalities schedule four informational sessions in early May

DEC to host two public availability sessions

Comments on draft plan accepted through June 2, 2017

A Draft Adirondack Rail Trail Conceptual Plan outlining the general design and features of the future 34-mile, multi-use recreational trail on the bed of the former railway between Lake Placid and Tupper Lake has been released for public review and comment, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos announced today.

“The Draft Adirondack Rail Trail Conceptual Plan is an important step in developing a unique, world class outdoor recreation trail like no other in the Adirondacks, New York State, or the nation,” said DEC Commissioner Seggos. “The rail trail will connect the villages of Tupper Lake, Saranac Lake, and Lake Placid, providing visitors and residents with new opportunities to walk, hike, and bike in three seasons, and cross-country ski, snowshoe, and snowmobile in winter, boosting local economies in surrounding communities all year long.”

The draft plan provides design recommendations based on the input from the Adirondack Rail Trail Stakeholder group. The shared goal of DEC and the Stakeholder group is to develop and manage a recreational trail that maximizes public use by residents and visitors of all abilities, ensures a safe and enjoyable experience for trail users, and minimizes negative effects on natural resources, adjacent residents, and other trail users.

The draft plan describes a 10-foot wide stone dust tread for the full 34-mile length of the trail with shoulders a minimum width of 2.5 feet on each side. The trail and its amenities will comply with American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements to the maximum extent possible to ensure it is accessible for use by people of all abilities. The trail will also connect to numerous hiking, biking, paddling, fishing, and camping opportunities on the adjacent lands and waters of the Adirondack Forest Preserve.

“The town of Tupper Lake is pleased to host the public meetings presenting the Adirondack Rail Trail plan,” said town of Tupper Lake Supervisor Patricia Littlefield. “This is an exciting opportunity for all the tri-lakes communities. It is a pleasure working with our neighboring stakeholders, as well as the DEC, and we look forward to this project coming to fruition.”

“The town of Harrietstown has reviewed the draft conceptual plan for the Adirondack Rail Trail,” said town of Harrietstown Deputy Supervisor Ed Goetz. “It appears that this venture will meet the needs and requirements of all those individuals who will be using the trail for a wide

variety of outdoor activities. Thank you for your efforts and we look forward to the completion of this project.”

“The Adirondack Rail Trail will provide an opportunity for cyclists, walkers, and cross-country skiers of all abilities to experience remote Adirondack woodlands on an improved trail surface,” said village of Saranac Lake Trustee Rich Shapiro. “The trail will provide Saranac Lake with easy intra-village connections for shopping, recreating, and commuting, and inter-village connections to Tupper Lake, DEC Campgrounds, Ray Brook, and Lake Placid. The trail will provide year-round opportunities for both visitors and residents.”

The municipalities along the rail trail corridor have scheduled four public information sessions where they will present the Draft Conceptual Plan and answer questions from attendees:

Village of Saranac Lake and town of Harrietstown (two meetings)

- May 1 and May 2 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Cantwell Community Room of the Saranac Lake Free Library at 109 Main St., Saranac Lake, NY

Village and town of Tupper Lake

- May 3 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Downstairs Community Room of Goff-Nelson Memorial Library at 41 Lake St., Tupper Lake, NY

Village of Lake Placid and town of North Elba

- May 4 May 4 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the First Floor Meeting Room of the Town Hall at 2693 Main St., Lake Placid, NY

DEC’s two meetings will include an availability session from 3 to 5 p.m. and a public meeting from 6 to 8 p.m. DEC will answer questions and accept comments during each of the two afternoon availability sessions. DEC staff will share a presentation and offer the public the opportunity to comment on the draft plan during the evening public meetings.

The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 9, in the Community Room of the Tupper Lake Emergency Services Building at 31 Santa Clara Ave., Tupper Lake, NY. The second meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 10, in the main conference room of the DEC Region 5 Headquarters at 1115 State Route 86, Ray Brook, NY.

The Draft Conceptual Plan is available to view or download on the DEC website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/62816.html>. Copies of the Draft Conceptual Plan are also available for review at DEC Region 5 Headquarters in Ray Brook and the municipal offices of the villages of Tupper Lake, Saranac Lake, and Lake Placid, and the towns of Tupper Lake, Santa Clara, Harrietstown, and North Elba.

Public comments will be accepted until close of business June 2, 2017. Written comments may be mailed to Senior Forester Steve Guglielmi, NYSDEC Region 5, P.O. Box 296, Ray Brook, NY 12977 or sent by e-mail to: r5.ump@dec.ny.gov.

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