



New York State
Department of Transportation
Joan McDonald, Commissioner



New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation
Joe Martens, Commissioner

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DEC AND DOT ANNOUNCE PLANS TO REINVIGORATE THE REMSEN TO LAKE PLACID TRAVEL CORRIDOR

State Agencies Seek Public Input on Possible Unit Management Plan Amendment to Convert the Tupper Lake to Lake Placid Segment to a Recreational Trail

State Agencies Will Also Explore Options to Bolster Rail Service Along Remainder of the Corridor and to Create and Expand Snowmobile Routes to Connect Communities between Old Forge and Tupper Lake

The State Departments of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Transportation (DOT) today announced that they will reopen the 1996 Unit Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (1996 UMP/EIS) for the Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor. The review will evaluate use of the Tupper Lake to Lake Placid segment for a recreational trail. It will also examine opportunities to maintain and realize the full economic potential of rail service on the remainder of the corridor. In addition, the state will review options to create and expand alternative snowmobile corridors to connect communities from Old Forge to Tupper Lake on existing state lands and conservation easements.

The UMP governs the use of the 119-mile Remsen to Lake Placid Travel Corridor. The determination to revisit the UMP was made following a thorough assessment of options and a review of the extensive public comments made during four public meetings held by DEC and DOT last year.

DEC and DOT will prepare the UMP and draft EIS, which will explore opportunities to increase recreational use of the rail corridor and ensure it promotes tourism and economic growth in the surrounding communities. As part of this process, the public will have an opportunity to review and comment on a draft scope that outlines significant issues and environmental impacts, and guides preparation of the UMP and draft EIS. In addition, the public will be able to review and comment on the draft UMP and draft EIS when they are deemed complete.

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Revisiting the 1996 UMP/EIS will enable DEC and DOT to thoroughly review those aspects of the 1996 UMP/EIS that recommend enhanced recreational opportunities and community connections, and to examine alternatives for the best future use of the Corridor along the Tupper Lake to Lake Placid segment. DEC and DOT will work with the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) and public stakeholders, including local officials and residents, to assess alternatives that reflect current realities along the corridor and potential environmental and economic impacts.

“Our goal is to protect our natural resources, while also exploring ways to increase opportunities for people to enjoy outdoor recreation activities in the Adirondacks,” DEC Commissioner Martens said. “We recognize that the future of the Remsen to Lake Placid Travel Corridor is important to local residents, communities and the regional economy, and the UMP process is the appropriate way to determine the best use of the corridor. We greatly appreciate the input received and continue to encourage the public and stakeholders to be actively involved in the UMP process since their views and interests will be an important part of the decision-making process.”

“The Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor is a tremendous transportation resource that traverses stunning landscapes across the northern Adirondacks,” DOT Commissioner Joan McDonald said. “In response to public interest, we are reopening the Unit Management Plan, providing new opportunities to engage local communities and support the regional economy as we plan for the corridor’s future.”

The UMP process will provide a transparent and public means of exploring a proposed amendment to the 1996 UMP/EIS that would maximize benefits from public use of the corridor and conform with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. Any proposed amendment would consider and incorporate public comments.

The rail service envisioned by the 1996 UMP/EIS has never been fully realized. The recurring short term lease under which the Adirondack Scenic Railroad operates has hindered the capital investment necessary to improve the rail line in the most remote sections of the corridor. This review will evaluate options to provide the long-term assurance to the rail operator and its investors need to move forward with much needed improvements.

Snowmobilers have long used the travel corridor during peak season to transit between communities. That use is made unsafe during periods of lesser snow as track becomes exposed. As part of this review, DEC will evaluate ways to expand snowmobile routes between the communities along the Old Forge to Tupper Lake segment of the corridor on state lands and conservation easements. This will open new recreational and tourism opportunities for those communities but also provide a safer riding experience for the snowmobiling community.

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