



PRESS RELEASE

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APA options for classification public hearings unwisely brings motorized access to the shores on Boreas Ponds

APA released just three options for public hearing, the fewest options for any major state lands classification public hearings in recent decades, and failed to give a fair hearing to key options advocated by the public

State options are limited and mystifyingly reckless for the extraordinary Boreas Ponds, akin to hanging a Van Gogh painting on a telephone post

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Lake George, NY -- Protect the Adirondacks finds the recently released classification options for the Boreas Ponds to be deeply flawed. Last week, the NYS Adirondack Park Agency (APA) released just three options for the classification of the newly purchased 21,500-acre Boreas Ponds tract. All three include motorized access that reached the shores of the Boreas Ponds. Protect the Adirondacks believes additional options must be considered in upcoming public hearings.

“Motorized access on the shorelines of Boreas Ponds should be rejected. There should only be motorized access for state officials during emergencies, otherwise the Boreas Ponds should be managed as Wilderness. The Boreas Ponds are a fragile, special ecological area and deserve the highest levels of protection by the State of New York,” said Peter Bauer, Executive Director of Protect the Adirondacks.

“The state’s classification option is akin to taking a Van Gogh painting and hanging it on a telephone post. These three options are mystifyingly reckless. We simply do not understand why the Cuomo Administration decided to play so fast and loose with the one of the most beautiful and precious natural areas in New York,” said Peter Bauer.

“We call upon the Adirondack Park Agency to stand up to the recklessness and carelessness of the Cuomo Administration and add new options for public hearing that protect the Boreas Ponds. At a minimum, the APA should add the option advanced by Protect the Adirondacks and The Nature Conservancy that keeps motor vehicle access more than a mile away from the Boreas Ponds. We also think that the total Wilderness option should also be considered

during public hearing. Options advocated by the public deserve a fair hearing,” said Peter Bauer.

The Cuomo Administration also refused to consider the creation of a new 12,000-acre Wilderness area in the southern Adirondacks – the West Stony Creek Wilderness. Protect the Adirondacks advocates that this area should be created through classification of 3,000 acres of newly purchased lands and reclassification of 9,000 acres of roadless Wild Forest lands. “The decision not even to consider the creation of the West Stony Creek Wilderness area is short-sighted. Clearly, in any rational world, there is more than just one option for the future of a tract of land, but in this case the APA has chosen exactly one, which is simply a public policy and stewardship failure. The APA appears to be taking an our-way-or-the-highway approach to public policy and we believe that a range of ideas and options should be given a fair hearing” said Peter Bauer.

The State of New York purchased the 21,500-acre Boreas Ponds tract in early 2016, the final lands of the 69,000 acres that Governor Cuomo committed to purchase for the Forest Preserve in 2012. An earlier part of this acquisition, the Essex Chain Lakes tract, was officially classified as a crazy quilt of Wild Forest. The NYS Adirondack Park Agency and Department of Environmental Conservation undertake official classification of new Forest Preserve lands as Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe, Wild Forest, Historic or Intensive Use. These classifications determine the types of public recreational use and management.

The APA plans to hold public hearings on classification of the Boreas Ponds tract, and other newly purchased lands, in November and December 2016.

Protect the Adirondacks

Protect the Adirondacks is a privately funded, IRS-approved not-for-profit organization dedicated to the protection of the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park in northern New York. PROTECT was formed through the merger of the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks and the Residents’ Committee to Protect the Adirondacks in 2009. PROTECT pursues its mission to protect the Adirondack Park and defend the public “forever wild” Forest Preserve through citizen advocacy, grassroots organizing, education, research, and legal action. PROTECT is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. PROTECT maintains an office in Lake George. For more information see www.protectadks.org.

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