



PRESS RELEASE

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PROTECT Releases New Report: *The Myth of Quiet, Motor-free Waters in the Adirondack Park*

Reports looks at public recreational uses on 200 largest lakes and ponds in the Adirondack Park, finds most are open for motorboats, jetskis and floatplanes

Just 29 lakes out of 200 largest in the Adirondacks are managed for motor-free experiences and only 17 of these are easily accessible

Public use of two of the largest 100 lakes in the Adirondacks – Third Lake and Boreas Pond – will be determined by the APA and DEC

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Lake George, NY – Protect the Adirondacks has just released a new report entitled *The Myth of Quiet, Motor-free Waters in the Adirondack Park*. This reports analyzed the public uses on the 200 largest lakes and ponds in the Adirondack Park. PROTECT found that there are relatively few opportunities for motor-free experiences on the biggest, most accessible lakes and ponds in the Adirondacks.

This report is available here: <http://www.protectadks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Motor-free-Waters-Report-web-version.pdf>

“The Adirondack Park is held up as the great wilderness area in the eastern United States. It’s the place where people come for a wilderness experience and to enjoy the great outdoors. One great myth about the wild Adirondack Park is that there is an abundance of motor-free lakes and ponds. In fact, the Park faces a scarcity of quiet waters where one can paddle a canoe or kayak without interruption from motorboats, jet skis, floatplanes, and other types of motorized watercraft,” said Chuck Clusen, Chair of Protect the Adirondacks.

Of the 200 largest lakes and ponds in the Adirondack Park, from Lake Champlain, with 262,864 acres, to Round Pond in Indian Lake, covering 134.9 acres, the overwhelming majority of big lakes and ponds provide abundant opportunities for motorized watercraft— but scant opportunity for quiet, motor-free waters.

“Across the Adirondack Park there are few genuine opportunities for motor-free boating on a big lake or pond. In the top 100 biggest lakes in the Adirondack Park, just five lakes stand out as lakes without motorboats, jetskis, and floatplanes; Lows Lake, Little Tupper Lake,

Round Lake, Lake Lila, and St. Regis Pond. These lakes are all managed as motor-free waterbodies as parts of the Forest Preserve. Three other lakes, Cedar Lake in the West Canada Lakes Wilderness Area, Newcomb Lake in the High Peaks Wilderness, and Pharaoh Lake in the Pharaoh Lake Wilderness are also motor-free, but they are largely inaccessible for boating by the general public. They are great lakes to hike to, and extraordinarily beautiful places, but they are difficult to reach with a boat,” said Peter Bauer, Executive Director of Protect the Adirondacks.

Of the 100 biggest lakes in the Adirondack Park, 77 are open for all manner of motorized boating and floatplanes. 13 lakes are privately owned and provide no public access, and just 8 are motor-free. Two lakes in the top 100 are currently in process of being purchased by the State of New York for addition to the Forest Preserve, after which the type of allowable public use will be determined through a public review process. The reality, therefore, is that more than 75% of the Park’s grandest lakes are open for motorized activity while only 8% offer the motor-free option, and just 5% are easily accessible for a motor-free experience.

For those who desire greater motor-free opportunities, the numbers improve slightly in an analysis of the 200 biggest lakes in the Adirondack Park. 115 (57%) of the Park’s 200 biggest lakes are open for motorized uses, 54 (27.5%) are privately-owned and thus closed, and 29 (14.5%) are open and motorless. However, of these 29 motor-free lakes, just 17 (9%) are easily accessible without long carries.

“Today, just five of the biggest 100 lakes in the Adirondacks are relatively easy to access and motor-free. Just 17 of the biggest 200 lakes are easily accessible and motor-free. The demand is high for motor-free experiences, but the supply is low. This needs to change. The public deserves greater opportunities for motor-free waters across the Adirondack Park,” said Peter Bauer.

Public Review for Classification and Use of Two Big Lakes Underway

In the spring of 2013, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) started its formal classification review for the new Forest Preserve lands around the Essex Chain Lakes. The Department of Environmental Conservation made its formal submission to the APA. The APA will conduct a formal public hearing process during the summer-fall of 2013. Part of the Essex Chain Lakes and one of the 200 largest lakes and ponds in the Adirondack Park is Third Lake (Minerva, Essex County).

Public use will be determined during the APA’s classification hearings. PROTECT supports a Wilderness classification for the Essex Chain Lakes. This provides an opportunity to increase the number of motor-free lakes among the biggest 100 lakes and ponds in the Adirondack Park from 8 to 9. Boreas Pond is scheduled to be purchased by the state within the next five years. This waterbody is another ideal candidate for motor-free management through a Wilderness classification. If Boreas Pond is classified as Wilderness and managed as a motor-free waterbody it would bring the number of motor-free lakes among the biggest 100 lakes in the Adirondacks to 10 lakes.

Analysis of Acreage of 200 Biggest Lakes and Ponds for Motors/Motor-free

When one compares the acreage of waters open for motor-free and motorized opportunities, the differences are stark. Fully 96% of the total surface water area of the 100 biggest lakes

and ponds in the Adirondack Park is dedicated to motorized boating; just 2% is open for public motor-free recreation. If we subtract Lake Champlain, which at 262,864 acres is vast and located partly in Vermont, and look only at waterbodies completely within the Blue Line, the amount of water area dedicated to motorized water uses is 90%. Just 5% is open for public motor-free opportunities.

Analysis of the surface areas of the 200 biggest lakes in the Adirondack Park finds 93% are dedicated to motorized uses. If Lake Champlain is excluded, the figure drops to 84% open for motorized uses. Only 7% of the acreage in these 200 biggest waters is devoted to motor-free use, and this figure includes the acreage for motor-free waterbodies that are difficult to reach with a boat.

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 guided by a volunteer Board of Directors. PROTECT maintains an office in Lake George. For more information see www.protectadks.org.

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