



PRESS RELEASE

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Trial over Future of Forest Preserve Starts March 1st

Trial focuses on amount of tree cutting and impacts to the Forest Preserve from construction of new 9-12 foot wide class II community connector snowmobile trails

For more information:

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Lake George, NY – The trial over the future of the management of the Forest Preserve will start in Albany County Supreme Court on March 1, 2017 at 11:00 AM. This trial will focus on management of the public “forever wild” Forest Preserve by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and Adirondack Park Agency. These agencies are currently building a network of 9-12 foot wide class II community connector snowmobile trails on the Forest Preserve that often require cutting down of 1,000 trees per mile and extensive grading and flattening with heavy equipment. Protect the Adirondacks believes that these trails violate Article 14, Section 1, the forever wild provision, of the State Constitution. The trial will run on March 1-2nd this week and March 13-16th. Additional dates may be required.

This lawsuit was filed by Protect the Adirondacks against the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and Adirondack Park Agency in 2013 alleging a violation of Article XIV, Section 1, the forever wild provision of the NYS Constitution. It is important for the future of forever wild because the state is currently working to build an extensive network of road-like trails through the Forest Preserve. To date, the state has built or plans to build over 36.5 miles of these trails, which will require clearing of more than 50 acres and destruction of over 31,000 trees. Protect the Adirondacks believes that if the State of New York wants to build a network of road-like trails through the Forest Preserve that require the cutting of tens of thousands of trees, then the state should pursue a constitutional amendment to accomplish this.

“Protect the Adirondacks looks forward to making our case about violations of the

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forever wild provision and State Constitution by state agencies to construct a new type of trail network throughout the Forest Preserve,” said Peter Bauer, Executive Director of Protect the Adirondacks.

In the summer and fall of 2016, the Appellate Division, Third Department, issued a series of preliminary injunctions to stop the State from cutting trees on the Forest Preserve to build these trails. That court extended this injunction in the fall so that it remains in place until the appeal of an earlier denial by the Supreme Court is resolved. This ban will likely extend into the field season in the summer of 2017 or longer. These injunctions have kept over 5,000 Forest Preserve trees alive, so far.

Protect the Adirondacks is being represented in this case by John Caffry of Caffry & Flower, and Claudia Braymer of Braymer Law, PLLC, both of Glens Falls. The Attorney General’s Office is representing the defendants.

Protect the Adirondacks

Protect the Adirondacks, Inc. (PROTECT) 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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