

Hello Rolf, the article you requested is below. Please keep me posted when you hear new developments on this issue. Thanks for your help -- Don

By Don Lehman  
NY Outdoor News

Ticonderoga, N.Y. — A New York State plan to restrict the use of a state-owned boat launch on a small lake in Essex County so trailered boats are no longer allowed has drawn the ire of local officials and residents alike who question whether the change will create public safety issues.

The Adirondack Park Agency has directed the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to block access for trailered craft at the state launch on Eagle Lake because the launch is considered a “non-conforming” structure in Hammond Pond Wild Forest that surrounds part of the lake.

It does not conform because unit master plans for lakes the size of Eagle Lake do not allow launches for trailers, as only lakes over 1,000 acres may have a trailer-accessible boat launch. Eagle Lake is 412 acres.

The launch off State Route 74 had been used by trailered boats for more than 50 years despite this apparent legal inconsistency. Those with canoes, kayaks and other car-top carried craft would still be able to access the lake despite the crackdown.

The state directive has resulted in opposition from lake residents, the local fire department and leaders from the town of Ticonderoga, who said the change could affect public safety and use of the lake. At least six homes on the lake’s southwest corner are accessible only by boat, and these residents will have to make other arrangements to get to and from their properties.

“No one has told us why they want to do this now,” Rolf Tiedemann, treasurer with the Eagle Lake Property Owners Inc., said. “It’s kind of a rash decision. The question is why all of the sudden are we out of compliance after 50 years?”

The Town of Ticonderoga and Essex County have passed resolutions in opposition to the decision. And those who are questioning the move have been in touch with the two state legislators who represent Ticonderoga, state Sen. Dan Stec, R-Queensbury, and Assemblyman Matt Simpson, R-Horicon. Both legislators said they have been in contact with the DEC and APA about the decision. Ticonderoga Supervisor Mark Wright said town officials plan to work with Stec and Simpson to try to intervene.

“I hate to see it close down,” Simpson said. “There has been some back and forth with the APA and DEC but it looks like they are moving forward.”

Chilson Fire Department Chief Mike Trybendis said the launch is an important access point for the fire department and other public safety agencies, and the lack of outreach from state agencies before the decision was made was concerning.

Tiedemann said the property owners group was hoping the state could compromise with limited hours for trailered boats. He pointed out that three other waters within minutes of Eagle Lake – Paradox Lake, Lincoln Pond and Putnam Pond – are smaller than 1,000 acres and have state-owned boat launches for trailered boats. But the APA rationale for allowing trailered craft on those waters is that they have state campgrounds with the launches.

Eagle Lake has campsites and a lean-to on state land on the lake's east end.

A spokeswoman for DEC said the final decision on the matter rests with the APA, which did not respond to a request for comment on the matter as of press time.

“APA interprets the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP) and therefore has authority of the final decision. DEC plans to post signage in 2023 and install the barrier at the end of the 2024 boating season,” the DEC said in a prepared statement.

The spokeswoman said data as to usage of the launch by trailered boats was not available, but she pointed out there is trailered boat access from private property on the lake.