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State says popular Eagle Lake ramp will remain open for now

BY **TIM ROWLAND**

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Photo by Tim Rowland

The Eagle Lake boat launch will remain in place for now, while the state studies the matter further.

RAY BROOK | After a public outcry at its proposed closure, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will allow the boat launch on Eagle Lake to remain open pending more study, a state forester told the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) Thursday.

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Magee said the DEC did get the message and reopened the comment period to allow Eagle residents a chance to have their say.

The UMP called for the gravel ramp to be blocked with a bar that, to guard against invasive species, would have prevented trailers from being backed into the water. The launch still could have been accessed by canoers and kayakers along with anglers strong enough to slide a small motorboat over the bar.

Residents said that failed to take into account the age of many Eagle Lake fishermen, who are no longer able to jockey motorboats over dry land. First-responders had also worried about access to camps on the far side of the lake.

INITIAL UMP

Magee said the state is allowing itself up to four years to make a final decision about the launch. APA deputy director of planning Rick Weber said that in retrospect, the launch should not have been permitted under the initial UMP, which was drawn up 30 years ago, because it is in violation of the state master plan that disallows boat launches on lakes of fewer than 1,000 acres. Eagle Lake is less than half that size.

Officials said they were inclined to respect the historical use of the launch, but bringing it into legal compliance is problematic. The state would have to reclassify the area from Wild Forest to High Intensity, then find a way to address the 1,000-acre regulation. That hard-and-fast rule is something that might need to be reconsidered in the future, Weber said. If a way is found to keep the launch open, it might also come with horsepower limitations on the lake, Magee said.


Along with the public ramp, there are several private ramps around the lake whose use is determined by the owners.

THROUGH APRIL 15

The APA moved the overall Hammond Pond UMP to its own public comment period, which will last through April 15. The Hammond Pond Wild Forest includes 45,500 acres largely between the Northway and Lake Champlain from Ticonderoga to Elizabethtown.

The UMP calls for a number of new trails, including hiking, biking, horse and snowmobile trails that will support the new campground and day-use area at Frontier Town off Northway Exit 29.

Those wishing to submit public comments to the APA may do so by emailing SLMP_UMP_Comments@apa.ny.gov.

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