

July 17, 2020

DEC Announces Completion of Oneida Lake's Historic Cleveland Dock

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced last week that the major restoration and rehabilitation of the historic Cleveland Dock Fishing Access Site is complete and the site is now open to the public. Cleveland Dock, located at 69 State Route 49 in the village of Cleveland, Oswego County, provides unique access to the excellent fishing on Oneida Lake and draws visitors for open water fishing, ice fishing, and boat docking. The site also provides emergency services access and helps connect boaters to the New York State Canal system.

Cleveland Dock was a significant historic maritime landing place on the Erie Canalway, originally acquired by New York State in 1916. Numerous accessibility improvements have now been made to expand recreational access for boaters, anglers, and visitors of all abilities. Due to age-related deterioration of its waterfront structures, including two protective breakwater walls, Cleveland Dock was in danger of total collapse. Rehabilitation work included removal of a failing concrete and timber sea wall and replacement with a steel sheet pile wall system. Improvements include grading, timber guide rails, railings, sidewalk, a concrete wall cap, benches, site electric, lamp posts, a hand launch for non-motorized boats, and parking lot upgrades. In addition, universally accessible site features include parking spaces and access along the edge of the pier, a picnic table, and fishing access along the pier railing.

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DEC funded \$788,310 of the restoration and stabilization activities through NY Works funding. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation provided \$150,000 through the state Environmental Protection Fund for a total investment of \$938,310. DEC will maintain the site in partnership with the New York State Canal Corporation, the site owner. Locally, the village of Cleveland, Oswego County, the Central NY Regional Planning and Development Board, the Oneida Lake Association and the Tug Hill Commission had assisted in efforts for its rehabilitation for over a decade.

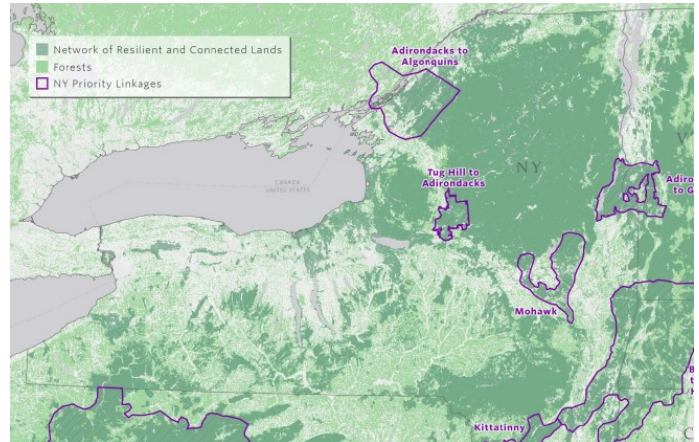
Oneida Lake, 10 miles north of Syracuse in Oneida and Oswego counties, is the largest lake lying wholly within New York State and is best known for its walleye and yellow perch fishery. During the open water season, the outflow from Black Creek combines with the deep water along the dock to attract a variety of fish species. Most notably, the dock provides access to post-spawn walleye in May and is also a great place to catch cruising walleye in the fall. Overall, the lake presents a diversity of fish species including bowfin, freshwater drum, longnose gar, pickerel, northern pike, and a variety of panfish.

The lake is also a fantastic bass fishing location and popular tournament stop for professional bass fishing organizations. In July 2020, *Bassmaster Magazine* ranked Oneida Lake 18th in the nation out of the top 25 best bass fishing lakes of the decade. There are few publicly accessible locations on Oneida Lake that rival the high-quality shoreline fishing opportunity provided by Cleveland Dock.

Tug Hill – Adirondack Wildlife Connections Highlighted in Adirondack Life Article

The Black River Valley serves as a passageway between the 1.2 million-acre Tug Hill region and the 6 million-acre Adirondack Park. This well-documented passageway, called the Black River Valley Wildlife Corridor, allows a large and diverse number of animals to travel long distances in search of food, water, shelter and potential mates. The Adirondack Life [article](#) by Norah Machia describes the ongoing work, highlighting a land protection project in the town of Forestport.

For over a decade, the Tug Hill Commission has partnered with the NYS Departments of Environmental Conservation and Transportation, the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, and Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust to improve the ability of animals to travel through the Black River Valley. The primary tools used are land use planning, transportation, and land protection. The effort is part of a broader [Staying Connected Initiative](#), a collection of over 65 public and private partners from five U.S. states and three Canadian provinces, working together to maintain habitat connectivity of the entire Northern Appalachian Acadian Ecoregion.



Remote Municipal Meetings an Option, Not a Requirement

With the recent extension of a municipality's ability to conduct municipal meetings other than 'in person' (see Executive Order [202.48](#)), some confusion seems to have arisen as municipal leaders make decisions on how to hold their meetings between now and the expiration of the executive order (August 5). Initially, through executive order and as subsequently extended, provisions of the Open Meetings law were superseded to allow municipalities to conduct meetings through such methods as Zoom and other meeting-sharing platforms. It does not *require* that, however.

The ability to hold a meeting on multiple remote locations of participants and the public was especially useful in the early days of the pandemic, when meeting sizes were required to be small, and holding a meeting via Zoom or other online platform may have been nearly a practical necessity. Any given community might reasonably expect to have attendees including the supervisor or mayor; the councilmen or trustees; the municipal clerk; the codes officer; the highway superintendent or head of the department of public works, the assessor, the fire chief, the person or persons in charge of the water system or wastewater treatment plant -- and now we're already past ten attendees, which was the meeting size limit in those early days, and that's before the first member of the public arrives!



Town of Constantia holds board meeting following recommended COVID-19 safety protocols.

So, the "Zoom meeting" provision did several things -- it meant that a municipality could include all the local officials necessary for the meeting, made provision for people being able to attend if they didn't want to expose themselves to the possibility of exposure, and allowed the public and media to attend.

Those provisions are still good and useful, but perhaps not as almost universally necessary as they were, now that meeting sizes are allowable up to fifty. Given a large enough meeting room, one which can accommodate six foot physical separation distances, and with the use of masks by meeting participants and attendees, a municipality may now be able to accommodate everyone who wanted to attend in person without having to have an other-than-in-person meeting component.

The bottom line is, don't feel like your municipality has to have a meeting via Zoom or other meeting-sharing platforms in the future should the governor extend the authorization once more. Use that meeting format if it works to meet the municipality's needs. If it does, Tug Hill staff will still be available to help with that as they have been.

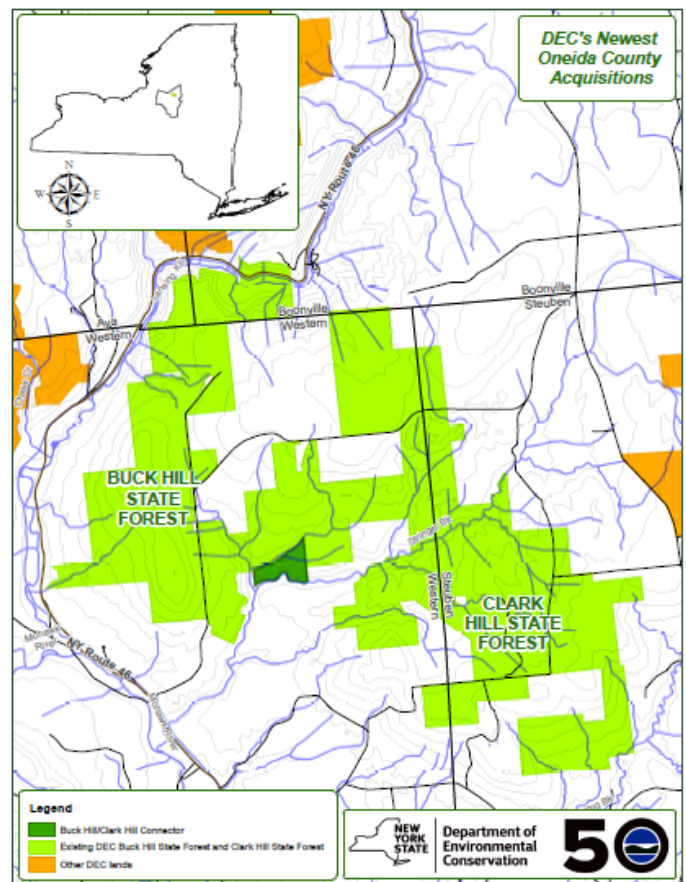
That said, **public hearings are still required to include a telephone or videoconference component.** The public must be given the opportunity to comment in a hearing remotely due to COVID-19 precautions. This stipulation was put forth in Executive Order [202.49](#) and expires August 6. Public hearings that won't have a Zoom or other tele/videoconference component should be postponed until after that date.

DEC Acquires Land in Oneida and Lewis Counties

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced new acquisitions this week that enhance public access to a variety of recreational opportunities, including hiking, fishing, snowmobiling, and hunting, as well as to protect critical wetlands and forests in the region. The acquisitions were made possible through the state Environmental Protection Fund.

In Oneida County, the state's acquisition of 324 acres in the town of Western for \$272,500 connects [Buck Hill](#) and [Clark Hill](#) state forests. This beautiful natural area serves as an important connectivity corridor for wildlife movement between the Tug Hill Plateau and the Adirondacks. The public will have access to hiking trails that lead to beautiful vistas and hunting opportunities.

In Lewis County, DEC invested \$16,400 for a public access easement over the 2,800-foot-long Fall Brook Access Road in the town of Osceola. The easement provides public access to the west portion of the 30,000-acre East Branch Fish Creek easement lands from North Osceola Road over Fall Brook. The opportunities to fish for brook trout are abundant and this route also serves as the main snowmobile corridor between Oswego and Lewis counties and points east.



Northern Border Regional Commission Announces 2020 Regional Forest Economy Partnership Grant Round

The Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) has announced the 2020 Regional Forest Economy Partnership (RFEP) grant application opportunity. Eligible organizations include nonprofit and governmental entities (state, local & Indian tribes), and total funding available for the program is \$4 million, with a maximum award of \$1 million. Grant application details are available at www.nbrc.gov.

Potential applicants are able to express interest through Letters of Interest, which must be submitted by Friday, August 28 at 5:00 p.m. Letters of Interest will be evaluated by a nine member Advisory Board, consisting of representatives from each of the four NBRC states. The Advisory Board will determine which applicants will be invited to submit a full application, which will be due October 30, with anticipation of awards in December.

The driving force behind the program is regional cooperation among NBRC states. As such, multi-state applications will be prioritized in the scoring process. The purpose of the program is to assist rural communities in transitioning from a historic dependence on the forest-based economy to new opportunities for economic diversity and innovation. These opportunities tend to cluster around three strategies, which may or may not be considered mutually exclusive for purposes of a proposal:

1. New technology and innovations that seek to find new uses for forest products, and evolve traditional forest economy business models into those that can create sustainable future commercial markets & opportunities.
2. Workforce re-training and development for the purpose of building the skills needed for forest products businesses.
3. New industries, or the expansion of current industries (e.g., outdoor recreation), that can provide employment and economic growth opportunities in formerly forest industry-dependent communities.

The RFEP opportunity in 2020 also focuses on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (and resulting economic uncertainty) on communities in the NBRC region. As such, a fourth strategy considered in 2020 seeks proposals focused on collaborative, multi-state projects designed to address innovative solutions to structural weaknesses highlighted by the pandemic, and community efforts to recover economically.

For those considering applications in 2020, please contact NBRC staff, and the NY program manager, Kyle Wilber, 518-473-3694, kyle.wilber@dos.ny.gov.

Fort Drum Programmatic Environmental Assessment Released; Comments Due August 5

Full document available at: https://home.army.mil/drum/application/files/6415/9369/6653/Fort_Drum_Draft_PEA_FNSI_Final_Master_06252020.pdf.
Warning, large file size.

Proposed Action: Increase air and land-based training activities conducted by the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) and the 10th Sustainment Brigade (SBDE), including in the Local Flying Area (LFA) training areas located in the following nine counties: Essex, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, and St. Lawrence.

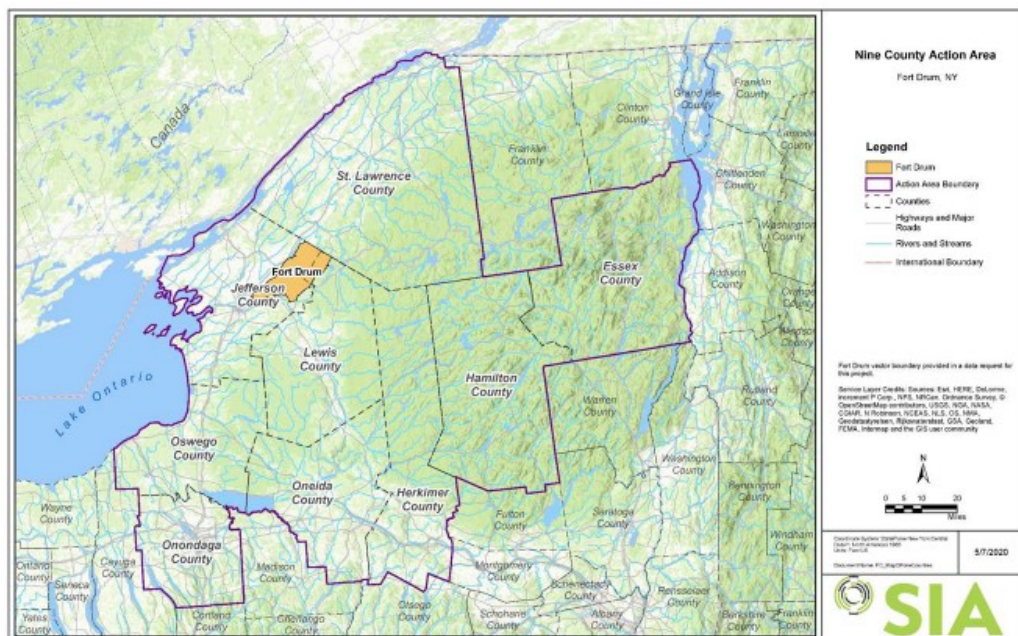


Figure ES-1: Nine-County Action Area

space area. The 10th CAB and 10th SBDE would conduct up to six high-intensity, multi-day training events per year to replicate multi-domain battle. Each training exercise could last up to 14 days, plus a seven-day period to return the property to its condition prior to the exercise.

Alternative 2: Same as Alternative 1, except only up to two training events per year.

Alternative 3: No action.

The PEA discusses potential environmental impacts in the following categories: Land Use; Noise; Airspace; Geology and Soils; Biological Resources; Water Resources; Cultural Resources; Socioeconomic, Environmental Justice; Transportation and Traffic; and Public Health and Safety. The PEA issues a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI).

Written comments on the PEA and draft FNSI are due by August 5, 2020 and should be submitted to Ms. Cait Schadock, NEPA Coordinator, Directorate of Public Works, Fort Drum, by phone at (315) 772-6899, by mail at 4896 Jones St., Fort Drum, NY 13602-5097, or by email at usarmy.drum.imcom.mbx.dpwnepa@mail.mil.

Purpose of Proposed Action: Ensure that the Army aviators of the 10th CAB and support units of the 10th SBDE at Fort Drum are provided with the practical and realistic flight proficiency and support services training. The Proposed Action is needed to meet mission requirements and maintain combat readiness and to provide additional and enhanced realistic training to 10th CAB and 10th SBDE.

Alternative 1: Increasing low level flight modes and movement techniques in the existing nine-county LFA outside the Fort Drum Army Installation Restricted Air-

Table ES-1. Criteria for Selecting Possible Exercise Locations

Criterion	Attributes for Consideration	Rationale
General Location	Within nine-county LFA; 60 to 75 miles from Fort Drum	10 th CAB aircraft approved for LFA; aircraft can be hangered at Fort Drum if less than 60 to 75 miles
Rural Areas Outside City Boundaries	Avoid populated areas, churches, schools, malls, highways, interstates	Reduce safety hazards, reduce noise annoyance, simulate real world conditions, avoid public disturbance
Location Size	Large event: 10 acres or greater; small event: five acres or less	Sufficient for sustainment operations, vehicle parking, aircraft ground operations
Vegetation Cover	Preferably grass, fields with few to no trees or shrubs	Reduce aircraft hazards; improved Line of Sight (LOS); reduced wildlife hazards
Surface Grade	Relatively level, <5 percent slope	Ease of sustainment set up; reduced erosion/ground disturbance
Soil Type	Well-drained and dry (no wetlands or floodplains); loam or clay soils without a lot of rocks; avoid prime farmland	Ease of sustainment set up; avoid impacts to wetlands/floodplains; prime farmland is protected under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 CFR 658)
Land Ownership	Public lands with signed Memorandum of Agreement or private land with a lease agreement; avoid protected lands, parks and recreation areas, if possible	Must establish a use agreement with the landowner as to what actions can or cannot be performed by the Army on the property owners of allowable actions
Flight Hazards	Avoid tall structures: towers, buildings, wind turbines, electrical poles/towers	Reduce flight safety risks; avoid populated areas
Airspace	Avoid restricted areas; accessible by helicopter using MTRs, MOAs or LFA	Approved Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) flight routes
Accessibility	Existing road or trail access	Less ground disturbance for surface vehicles
Cultural Resources	Avoid properties and sites listed on the National Register of Historic Properties; avoid Tribal land	Avoid impacts to cultural resources

North Star Food Hub Growing



The North Star Food Hub is a distributor and marketplace of food grown and produced in New York State, focusing primarily on products from Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Oswego, and Lewis counties. The food hub helps North Country farmers to work together to meet the growing demand for local, sustainable food. Products for sale include fresh produce, dairy, meat, honey, maple syrup, breads, and more, with products being added regularly.

The food hub works in collaboration with the respective Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations and New York State Agriculture and Markets to help local producers expand their production and become more competitive in the marketplace. The food hub's online marketplace allows for both retail and wholesale shopping from a variety of local farms and producers.

Find out more at www.northstarfoodhub.com/

Jefferson County Livestock Industry Interview July 23

Jefferson County Economic Development is continuing the farmer's luncheon series on Thursday, July 23 at noon with Dr. Travis Maddock, an international consultant in the livestock industry and founder/owner of Dakota Global Consulting, LLC. Jefferson County Agricultural Coordinator Jay Matteson will discuss with Dr. Maddock the livestock industry and what it may look like in 2025 after the COVID 19 disaster. What should farms do now to sustain and grow their businesses? How do we respond to the challenges encountered and take advantage of opportunities created? There will be opportunities for participants to ask questions throughout the program.

Register for the presentation at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NSTwtj16TguFMYRvLdFE2g.

DOS Training Webinars Available On-line for Planning Officials

The Department of State (DOS) Division of Local Government Services has the following on-line training webinars available for planning officials at www.dos.ny.gov/lg/lut/recorded-webinars.html.

It is up to individual town and village boards to decide if viewing these webinars counts towards the training requirement for members of planning boards and zoning board of appeals under Town Law Sections 267 and 271, Village Law Sections 7-712 and 7-718, and General City Law Sections 27 and 81. Participants should verify with their local governing board or municipal clerk. The DOS cannot verify participation in training by viewing these previously recorded webinars.

Blight: Strategies & Tools for Local Governments - Recorded: June 10, 2020

Comprehensive Planning - Recorded: May 27, 2020

Land Use Moratoria - Recorded: May 13, 2020

Public Meetings and Hearings - Recorded: April 29, 2020

Zoning Board of Appeals Overview - Recorded: January 15, 2020

Adaptive Reuses for White Elephants - Recorded: December 18, 2019

Intermunicipal Cooperation in Building Code Enforcement - Recorded: December 4, 2019

SEQR Basics with Updates to Regulations - Recorded: December 20, 2018

Government Efficiency in the Comprehensive Plan - Recorded: December 13, 2018

County-wide Shared Services Virtual Meet-up - Recorded: April 18, 2018

Health Insurance: Options for Savings from Shared Services - Recorded: April 18, 2018

Planning Board Overview - Recorded: January 11, 2018

Hot Button Land Uses - Recorded: December 20, 2017

The Challenges with Local Government Reorganization - Recorded: December 19, 2017

Contact Us

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For upcoming trainings, grant deadlines, and meetings, view our [calendar](#).