

REGION 6 FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD'S
QUARTERLY MEETING REPORT

At its quarterly meeting on March 17 in Watertown, the Region 6 Fish and Wildlife Management Board approved the following resolutions to be forwarded to the State Fish and Wildlife Management Board:

RESOLUTION 1 - A resolution calling for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Draft Strategic Plan for State Forest Management to include provisions for the sporting community to utilize ATVs as a means for access for DEC recognized recreation programs such as hunting, fishing, trapping, camping, wildlife viewing on state land.

A concern by the sporting community has been documented over the systematic reduction in motorized access for sportsmen and women within Region 6, including the use of ATVs on wild forest lands, forest preserve lands and easement land. The Region 6 Fish and Wildlife Management Board has given unanimous support for allowing current open ATV access for DEC recognized recreation programs and calls for expanded ATV and other motorized access for sportsmen and women, including the handicapped, disabled veterans and the elderly.

RESOLUTION 2 - A resolution opposing the closing of roads utilized for sportsmen and women access as part of DEC's Unit Management Plan process, including the Watson's East Triangle UMP. It has come to the attention of the Region 6 Fish and Wildlife Management Board that DEC is currently closing roads through the unit management process and as a result, restricting the sporting community's access to fishing, trapping and hunting on state and easement lands.

RESOLUTION 3 – A resolution showing support for New York State Senate Bill S1625 and Assembly Bill A01082 to amend the Traffic and Vehicle Law in relation to the designation of highways and public lands for travel by ATVs.

Current Vehicle and Traffic Laws restricts counties and towns from opening roads to adjoining trail systems. Senator Joe Griffo has submitted bill S1625 and Assemblyman Destito has submitted bill A01082 to amend subdivision one of section 2405 of the Vehicle and Traffic Law to allow a governmental agency or municipality to designate a state highway or a highway controlled by a government agency as open for travel by ATVs in order to gain access to areas or trails near such highways or roads.

In some areas of the counties, using these roads is really the only way to gain access to nearby trails.

OTHER RELATED BUSINESS

- Signs have been posted by DEC personnel on the Oswegatchie River in Ogdensburg outlining the new law prohibiting from the Algonquin Dam to its mouth at the St. Lawrence River to protect the valuable walleye spawning habitat there.
- DEC wildlife biologists reported a successful bear hunting season in the Adirondack Region for 2010 while the buck take in St. Lawrence County was down. DEC

biologists will be taking a look at what is causing this decline in buck numbers in our county.

- The fish and wildlife management board will draft a resolution opposing the cuts by Gov. Andrew Cuomo to DEC hatcheries across the state. These cuts to personnel will impact stocking at St. Lawrence County rivers, streams and lakes and will therefore hurt our growing tourism and fishing opportunities.

Respectively submitted,

Matthew J. Curatolo
St. Lawrence County Representative
Region 6 Fish and Wildlife Management Board