

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

DEC releases NYS Forest Action Plan

11 February 2020

ALBANY — The state Department of Environmental Conservation has released the draft New York State Forest Action Plan for public review and comment.

The State Forest Action Plan is a 10-year strategic plan for DEC and New York's forestry community that provides long-term, comprehensive, and coordinated strategies for addressing the challenges facing New York's forests today.

"Each decade, developing the state's Forest Action Plan provides an opportunity for DEC to assess our priorities for managing and protecting New York's forests for the future," said Commissioner Basil Seggos. "The future of our forests affects every one of us, and I encourage New Yorkers to review the plan and provide feedback to ensure all voices are heard in this process."

The draft Forest Action Plan leverages New York's forests in the fight against climate change. New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act sets the state on a path to achieve a carbon-free electricity system by 2040, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions 85 percent by 2050.

Forests and forest products are a vital resource for mitigating total greenhouse gas emission levels through carbon sequestration and long-term storage, the DEC said. The draft plan identifies ways that New York's forests can realize this potential as part of the state's comprehensive climate change solution.

The federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act requires each state forestry agency to develop "Statewide Assessment and Strategies for Forest Resources," collectively referred to as the State Forest Action Plan. A final State Forest Action Plan, which will be an update to New York's 2010 Plan, is due in June 2020.

New York's State Forest Action Plan addresses the three national priorities identified by the U.S. Forest Service:

- * Conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses;
- * Protect forests from threats; and
- * Enhance public benefits from trees and forests.

New York's plan builds on these priorities and identifies four primary goals for New York's forests:

Keep New York's forests as forests;

- * Keep New York's forests healthy;
- * Ensure forests benefit humans and all living creatures; and
- * Ensure support, protection, and appreciation of New York's forests.

The public is encouraged to comment on the 2020 draft State Forest Action Plan through April 3. DEC will review and address all comments received. The draft plan is posted on the DEC website. Comments can be directed to: Sara Hart, Natural Resources Planner, 625 Broadway, 5th Floor, Albany, NY 12233-4254, or ForestActionPlan@dec.ny.gov.

DEC will conduct a public meeting on Feb. 26, from 1 to 3 p.m., at 625 Broadway, Albany, NY, Public Assembly Room 129.

Source: http://www.oleantimesherald.com/news/local/dec-releases-nys-forest-action-plan/article_e18b68a6-3cdb-5fc3-9422-8c9582541fe5.html