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December 5, 2014

Ms. Kathy Regan  
Deputy Director, Planning  
Adirondack Park Agency  
PO Box 99  
Ray Brook, NY 12977

Re: Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan

Dear Ms. Regan:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) is a nationwide not-for-profit individual membership organization including 11,817 pilots and aircraft owners in New York State. AOPA's mission is to effectively serve the interests and needs of its members as aircraft owners and pilots and establish, maintain, and articulate positions of leadership to promote the economy, safety, utility, and popularity of flight in general aviation aircraft. Representing two thirds of all pilots in the United States, AOPA is the largest civil aviation organization in the world.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input to the amendment and update process for the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. AOPA recognizes that there are many ways to enjoy the Park as well as many different ways to access it. We wish to focus on the use of seaplanes and encourage the Park to continue to permit their use throughout the Park in designated areas.

Seaplanes offer a minimally intrusive means of accessing Park and backcountry areas. They don't require any prepared or man-made support such as roads or other infrastructure, and they offer the least intrusive means of accessing the Park for visitors with disabilities, providing them with opportunities to enjoy remote areas of the Park they may not otherwise enjoy.

Seaplanes also offer an administrative benefit to the Park. They are useful in conducting surveys of the Park conditions, water quality analysis and providing emergency assistance and evacuation of injured or sick visitors as well as search and rescue functions.

AOPA respectfully requests that the Park management make a distinction between motorized access and seaplanes as they consider the land use plan updates. To comingle seaplanes in with other forms of motorized recreation is not a fair comparison. Seaplanes have a minimal wake and leave only ripples when they land and take off. Since they are a means of access, once visitors have landed the engine is shut down and they go off to enjoy hiking, fishing, canoeing, or tenting the same as other backcountry visitors, rather than continuously operate their motors for propulsion.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this issue. We look forward to working with your department and maintaining seaplane access to the Park.

Sincerely,

John L. Collins  
Manager  
Airport Policy

Cc:

Mr. Russ Holland, New York State Liaison, Recreational Aviation Foundation  
Mr. Sean Collins, AOPA Northeast Regional Manager