



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation



Adirondack  
Park Agency

June 2019

## **MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE**

**SITING, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF PRIMITIVE TENT  
SITES IN WILDERNESS, PRIMITIVE, CANOE AND WILD FOREST AREAS  
ON FOREST PRESERVE LANDS  
IN THE ADIRONDACK PARK**

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## Overview and Statement of Purpose

Camping at primitive tent sites on lands classified as Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe and Wild Forest in the Adirondack Park is an important recreational opportunity with a long history. The purpose of the Management Guidance Siting, Construction and Maintenance of Primitive Tent Sites in Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe and Wild Forest Areas on Forest Preserve lands in the Adirondack Park (Tent Site Guidance) is to present guidelines for managing primitive tent sites. The tent site guidance provides criteria for site size limits, allowable improvements, signage, accessibility, roadside camping, groupings of tent sites. It is intended to manage primitive tent sites in a manner that protects natural resources and wild forest character of the Park while also providing a valuable recreational opportunity.

## History of Camping in the Adirondack Forest Preserve

Some of the earliest camping development in the Adirondack Park was facilitated by private resort hotels. Led by guides, some visitors would go out on multi-day excursions from the hotels. The guides would establish a camp for their guests which included clearing an area, building a shelter and providing food services. Over time these camps received repeated use and became permanent campsites.

Recreational development of the Forest Preserve by a State agency prior to the 1920s was very limited. However, the Forest Commission (the predecessor of the Conservation Commission) encouraged recreational use and made particular note of the availability of camping opportunities on Lake George and Saranac Lake in one of its first reports. In 1891, the Forest Commission described camping on Lake George as the following:

*The most desirable places for camping are in the Narrows, where there are plenty of large, well-shaded islands affording ample room and complete seclusion for all who may wish to come... These islands are open to all. Anyone may occupy ground for a temporary camp, free of charge, the only requirement being that no trees shall be injured, and that certain rules regarding the use of fire shall be observed. They are held by the State for the benefit of the public. The Commission would be pleased to see each island occupied and hope that more of our citizens will avail themselves of the rare advantages which they offer for summer camps.*

In 1916 the Conservation Commission (predecessor of the Conservation Department) began issuing camping permits allowing for the construction of tent platforms. These platforms were restricted to 400 square feet wooden frames up to three feet tall. The platforms were available for the public when the permittee was not using the site.

By the end of the First World War demand for recreation had grown significantly in the Adirondacks. Road improvements and the affordability of the automobile attributed to

the demand. Increasing numbers of the middle class traveled and vacationed in the Adirondacks with their cars. In 1919 the Conservation Commission admitted:

*It is somewhat surprising that in more than thirty years of continuous development of the Forest Preserve, during which time probably more votes were cast for the protection and extension of this property on account of aesthetic motives, than for any other reason, not a single vacationists' trail was ever built or marked on State property at State expense, not an open camp or fireplace was constructed by the State, nor any vacation map or guide book published by the State, nor in fact much else done by the State itself to make this big vacation country more accessible, more interesting, and better known to those whose property it is.*

1919 marked the beginning of New York State's efforts to systematically develop recreational facilities throughout the Adirondacks: the first State lean-tos were erected, the first official trails were marked, and the first public campsites were developed. From 1919 to 1924, the demand for public camps in the Adirondacks increased to a point that management actions were necessary including providing sanitary facilities, drinking water, and site maintenance. The "demand" for these amenities and subsequent concentration of sites led to the development of the first campgrounds in the Forest Preserve, including: Sharp Bridge, Lewey Lake, Wilmington Notch, and Sacandaga.

During the expansion of the public campgrounds, the tent platform permit system grew. This system became popular along the shorelines of waterbodies. For example, more than 300 tent platform sites were established on the Saranac Lakes. Many tent platforms were used by the owners so frequently and for many years that these essentially became private camps on State land, making the program increasingly problematic. In 1956 the Conservation Department issued regulations to address some tent platforms issues. These regulations included clarifying size limits, allowing the establishment of water wells, prohibiting covered docks, and limiting docks to a size of 3 feet wide by 20 feet long. Eventually, the Conservation Department ceased issuing permits for new tent platforms.

During the 1960s, the Forest Preserve saw a significant growth of outdoor recreation and responses to the need for recreation management. In 1962, the predicted demand for camping opportunities over the next decade in the northeast was expected to increase 150%. In 1972, the APSLMP established guidelines for the primitive tent sites, including prohibiting tent platforms.

Camping opportunities on Adirondack Forest Preserve lands are available within all the land classification categories except State Administrative areas. A spectrum of camping is allowed on the Forest Preserve, from more developed camping in Intensive Use areas to less developed camping in Wilderness areas. Highly developed, purpose-built, drive-in campsites are typically found within Intensive Use areas. Although roadside camping is provided for in Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe and Wild Forest areas, this access is to a primitive tent site which is intentionally designed to be less developed than the drive-in camping that is found in Intensive Use areas.

## **Statutory Guidelines for Managing Primitive Tent Sites**

The management of primitive tent sites is directed by several sources, including the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), the New York Code, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Title 6, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APLSMP), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Tent Site Guidance references these sources.

### **Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan**

The [APSLMP](#) allows for primitive tent sites to be designated in Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe and Wild Forest areas. The APSLMP states that primitive tent sites shall be out of sight and sound and generally one-quarter mile from any other primitive tent site or lean-to.

### **NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) Code, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR), Title 6**

The Department creates and enforces regulations as authorized by the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), including the issuance of camping permits for a limited and temporary basis. The following are applicable [regulations](#) the Department employs for managing camping on all state lands including the Forest Preserve:

- a. 6 NY-CRR 190.0 (b) Definitions
- b. 6 NY-CRR 190.3 Camping Sites
- c. 6 NY-CRR 190.4 Camping Permits
- d. 6 NY-CRR 190.6 Open Camps

### **Access for Persons with Disabilities**

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that programs (e.g. camping and boating) are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The Department uses the US Access Board's [Final Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas](#) as guidance for the creation and alteration of primitive tent sites to ensure compliance with the requirements of the ADA. The Department's *Standard Accessible Designs for Outdoor Recreational Facilities* provides resources for creating accessible outdoor facilities not covered under either the ADA or the [Architectural Barriers Act](#) (ABA).

## **Definitions Used in the Tent Site Guidance**

Camping – overnight occupancy by visitors of facilities or space.

Primitive Tent Site- The APSLMP defines a primitive tent site “as a designated tent site of an undeveloped character providing space for not more than three tents, which may have an associated pit privy and fire ring, designed to accommodate a maximum of eight people on a temporary or transient basis, and located so as to accommodate the need for shelter in a manner least intrusive on the surrounding environment.” (APSLMP)

Single-Lane Parking Area – A parking area associated with a primitive tent site that has a linear design and is wide enough for passage of one motor vehicle, long enough to accommodate two or more vehicles and/or a vehicle and camper and does not provide a motor vehicle turn-around at its terminus.

Roadside Camping – Camping at a primitive tent site within 250 feet of a motor vehicle road.

## **Guidance for Managing Primitive Tent Sites in Areas Classified as Wilderness, Primitive, and Canoe**

The guidance below applies to primitive tent sites on lands classified as Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe in the Adirondack Park. The Department will apply the guidance through the UMP (Unit Management Plan) process to the extent practicable. The planning and management guidance developed is applicable to site size limits, allowable improvements, accessibility, and roadside camping. Unless otherwise stated, these provisions also apply to lands classified as Wild Forest.

### **At-Large Camping**

Many people enjoy the solitude and primitive experience of camping away from designated tent sites where no facilities are provided. At-large camping is the term used for this experience.

To discourage the public from camping in unsuitable locations that have the potential to negatively impact the environment or the enjoyment of other users, the Department promulgated regulations to limit at-large camping. 6 NYCRR 190.3 (b) prohibits at large camping within 150 feet of any road, trail, spring, stream, pond or other body of water except at camping sites designated by the Department.

At-large sites that are causing adverse impacts may be closed by the Department through brushing and posting closed (see Site-closure).

At-large sites that are used repeatedly provide important insight into patterns of visitor use. Formal adoption of an at large campsite as a designated primitive tent site will be a part of developing or amending the Unit Management Plan for the area.

## **Designation of Primitive Tent Sites**

The Department designates Primitive Tent Sites through the Unit Management Planning (UMP) process. The Department designates these sites with a yellow “Camp Here” disc. In some cases, but not all, these sites may have an associated pit privy and fire ring.

The Department can also designate a primitive tent site on a limited and temporary basis by issuing a camping permit for a particular location. When issuing these camping permits, Department staff should strive to avoid designating camping within 150 feet of any road, trail, spring, stream, pond or other body of water whenever possible. With respect to temporary camping locations designated by permit”

- A list of suitable temporary camping locations which could be designated by permit shall be developed by the unit land manager in consultation with the Regional Forester and local Forest Ranger to direct visitors during appropriate times of year and under suitable conditions
- If a temporary camping location begins to show adverse impacts from use, the location will be rested or removed from future consideration
- Temporary camping locations will remain undeveloped, unmarked, and lack improvements such as fire ring and privy
- Camping permit records will be reviewed during the development of Unit Management Plans

## **Primitive Tent Site Location**

Primitive tent site locations are chosen for the enjoyment of the visitor and protection of natural resources.

Primitive tent sites shall be out of sight and sound and generally ¼ mile from any other primitive tent site or lean-to. Where severe constraints prevent attainment of the guideline for separation of generally ¼ mile lesser separation may be considered through the UMP process on site by site basis.

Primitive tent sites located between 3500 and 4000 feet in elevation may be designated on a site-specific basis through Unit Management Plans where physical and biological conditions are favorable. They shall not be located where they will adversely affect populations of rare, threatened or endangered species of plants and animals.

Primitive tent sites should be located away from known populations of invasive species to help minimize their spread.



Primitive tent sites should be located where sustainable conditions. Sustainable conditions include sufficient space and suitable soils to accommodate a pit privy located at least 150' from the Mean High-Water Mark of any lake, pond, river, or stream or wetland. New or relocated primitive tent sites located adjacent to water bodies will incorporate screening to protect the wild character of the shoreline. No primitive tent site should be located where significant impact to the environment will occur or has occurred through overuse.

Primitive tent sites may be relocated, modified or closed at any time in order to manage public use and lessen environmental impacts.

### **Primitive Tent Site Size Limits**

Camping at primitive tent sites may have social and ecological impacts. With respect to ecological impacts, trees can be compromised through root exposure, cutting limbs and maiming of trunks. Vegetation may be decreased, and species composition could be changed. Compacted soils might limit the health and vigor of plants and prevent them from growing. Camping also can have aesthetic impacts, including decreasing screening between sites and shade, and diminishing the wild and undeveloped character of the area

With respect to the size limit for a designated primitive tent site, they will provide space for not more than three tents and will not exceed 1,200 square feet in size for each site. 1200 square feet is a measurement of the ground surface area exhibiting impacts from visitor use of the campsite as measured with the Primitive Tent Site monitoring methodology.

### **Primitive Tent Sites Located along Roads**

Primitive tent sites with parking adjacent to a road are allowed in all land classifications. Historically, many former log landings or roadside pull-offs were converted to parking areas for primitive tent sites. Activities within the parking area are limited to parking; however, during big game hunting season camping in a motor vehicle or trailer is allowed under a permit by the DEC. All other camping activities are directed to the primitive tent site.

The following management guidance applies to Roadside Camping:

- Primitive tent sites within 250 feet of a road may have motor vehicle parking near or adjacent to a road
- The primitive tent site will be located a minimum of 100 feet from the parking area unless the site has effective vegetative and/or topographic screening permitting a shorter distance
- Signage at primitive tent site parking areas will state that the parking is for use by the primitive tent site occupant only

- Parking areas associated with individual Primitive tent sites may be used for camper/RV camping during big game hunting season under permit from the Department.
- Primitive tent sites that do not conform to the above design standards will be assessed through the UMP process and may be redesigned, relocated or closed.

### **Allowable Structures and Improvements at Primitive Tent Sites**

Primitive tent sites are intended to have a undeveloped character. The APSLMP states primitive tent sites may have;

- space for not more than three tents
- pit privy
- fire ring

The following features are permitted in association with primitive tent sites only for resource protection purposes. They are intended to be used to the minimal extent deemed necessary.

- Steps – Steps constructed of timber or stone at shoreline access points or at other locations that lead to a primitive tent site where foot traffic threatens or is causing serious erosion
- Sitting logs or stones - Hand hewed or natural logs (not hewed) or stones

The placement of the following may require inter-agency consultation:

- Side hill tent site – Locations with deep well-drained upland soils on cross slopes less than 15% may incorporate a maximum of 3 bench-cut sidehill tent sites. Each side hill tent site will be no more than 200 square feet in size. The downslope side of the bench cut may be supported by logs or stone
- Raised earthen tent pads – A maximum of three raised earthen tent pads may occur at a single primitive tent site. Each raised earthen tent pad will be no more than 200 square feet in size, no higher than 20 inches above natural grade, and may be supported or delineated by logs or stone material (stone preferred) found on or near the site
- Roadside parking area – Parking areas provided for Roadside camping must be no larger than necessary to serve the site unless it is determined within the UMP that the parking area will serve additional purposes

Primitive tent sites are potential sites for wildlife encounters as wildlife forage for food in their habitat. The following Leave No Trace (LNT) principals may be applied to protect wildlife and the humans at primitive tent sites:

- separation of the cooking area from sleeping areas
- consideration of prevailing winds direction, and the location of the cooking areas and sleeping area

For this guidance, the “cooking area” is the common gathering area where the fire ring is located, if campfires are allowable. At locations where campfires are not allowed a cooking area away from the sleeping area may still be designated (typically this is the cleared area in close proximity to the DEC disk). The combined square footage of the sleeping area and cooking area should not exceed 1200 sq. ft.

## **Accessibility**

All visitors are welcome to explore outdoor recreation opportunities on State lands. The ADA requires an ongoing obligation to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from programs and services because facilities are unusable or inaccessible. Accessible elements such as fire rings and pit privies, for example, serve to meet this objective.

Primitive tent sites with accessible features or improvements will be identified for the public on appropriate maps and kiosks. These features will also be identified on site with the International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA).

Primitive tent sites with accessible features are generally not for exclusive use by individuals with disabilities, but are generally available on a first-come, first-serve basis. If it is found that individuals with disabilities are regularly unable to find and use accessible sites in a given area, then the Department may designate primitive tent sites with accessibility features for exclusive use as per NYCRR 190.3 (f).

## **Primitive Tent Site Management Zones**

As part of UMP development, primitive tent site management zones can be used to assist managers in attaining compliance with the US Access Board Final Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas. Primitive tent site management zones are a simple way of classifying the spatial and/or programmatic variability of camping opportunities within a particular unit. They can be used to help verify that the Department complies with minimum standards of sites with accessibility features and that sites with accessibility features are representative of the various recreational opportunities available. The following should be considered as part of creating primitive tent site management zones and ensuring camping is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities:

- geographic locations
- number of primitive tent sites
- the varying types of camping settings (water front, roadside, primitive tent site or lean-to)

Some UMPs may have multiple zones and others may not require tent site management zones. The number of primitive tent sites in each zone will determine the number of primitive tent sites that require accessibility features to ensure program accessibility. The ratio must comply with the U.S. Access Board’s Final Guidelines for Federal Outdoor Developed Areas.

## Guidance on Accessibility for New or Rehabilitated Primitive Tent Sites

The Department uses the U.S. Access Board's Final Guidelines for Federal Outdoor Developed Areas as amended in 2013 (Access Board Guidelines) as guidance for complying with the ADA. The number of accessible primitive tent sites must comply with the minimum number required by the Access Board Guidelines. When a pit privy, picnic table, fire ring or sitting log is added or altered as an element associated with any primitive tent site, the Department will replace that element with one that is accessible. The addition or alteration of any other accessible element proposed for a primitive tent site will be subject to prior consultation between the Department and the Agency. The Access Board Guidelines recognize the existence of constraints and limitations in the outdoor environment and allows for departures from the Guidelines in situations where terrain and other factors make compliance impracticable or when the fundamental nature of the program would be altered. Documentation is required when full compliance with Access Board Guidelines cannot be achieved. This documentation will be recorded on the "Determination of Exemptions From Accessibility Requirements For New Construction/Rehabilitation Projects" form in Appendix C.

The Department will use standards found within the Department's Standard Accessible Designs for Outdoor Recreational Facilities (2014) for the construction or alteration of accessible features. See Appendix A for guidance with respect to accessibility for new or altered primitive tent sites.

## **Site Closure**

Primitive tent sites and At-large sites may be closed because of overuse or other emergency or environmental reasons by the posting of a standard "No Camping" and/or "Site Restoration in Progress" sign or a standard symbol disk marker provided for such purpose. When the site has been restored to a natural condition, the sign(s) or marker(s) may be removed. Tent site closure may include planting native species, adding leaf litter and woody debris, scarification of compacted soils, and installation of rocks to deter use.

Primitive tent sites that have been determined through the UMP process to not conform to separation distance guidelines in the SLMP will be closed or brought into compliance on a phased basis and within three years of the adoption of a UMP.

## **Guidance for Managing Primitive Tent Sites in Areas Classified as Wild Forest**

All preceding primitive tent site guidance that applies to Wilderness, Primitive and Canoe areas will apply to lands classified as Wild Forest. In addition, the following supplemental guidance applies to primitive tent sites located in Wild Forest:

### **Primitive Tent Sites Located along Roads**

Primitive tent sites with a single-lane Parking Area (parking area) are only available in lands classified as Wild Forest.

The following management guidance applies to parking areas:

- The parking area is located a minimum of 100 feet from the associated primitive tent site, unless there is effective vegetative and/or topographic screening, permitting a shorter distance
- The parking area is for use by the primitive tent site occupant
- Activities within the parking area are limited to parking and sleeping in a motor vehicle or camper; all other camping activities are directed to the primitive tent site; a permit is required for sleeping in a motor vehicle or camper
- The parking area is a single lane which is wide enough for passage of a motor vehicle or camper
- The parking area must comply with DEC Standard Accessible Designs for Outdoor Recreational Facilities if the primitive tent site is designed to be fully accessible
- The parking area is long enough to accommodate two or more vehicles and/or a vehicle and camper in a single-lane, but is no more than 150 feet in length
- The parking area does not have a vehicle turn-around at its terminus
- The parking area is effectively screened from the road
- The parking area is signed appropriately including: 1) "No Tenting," 2) one each of "Tent Site" and "Fire Ring," with an arrow directing visitors to the tent site, and 3) "Accessible", when applicable, also with an arrow directing visitors to the tent site

### **Groupings of Primitive Tent Sites**

The APSLMP allows for small groupings of primitive tent sites designed to accommodate a maximum of 20 people per grouping in Wild Forest areas. These primitive tent site groupings must be widely dispersed (generally a mile apart), be sited at least 100' from the mean high water mark of adjacent water bodies, be located in a manner that will blend in with the surrounding environment and have a minimum impact on the wild forest character and natural resource quality of the area.

The following is management guidance for small groupings of primitive tent sites on lands classified as Wild Forest:

- The number of permits issued will not exceed the number of group sites available
- Small groupings of primitive tent sites primarily accessed from water bodies will not exceed a combined size of 1,600 square feet
- Small groupings of primitive tent sites primarily accessed by land will not exceed a combined size of 2,400 square feet
- Each tent site in the grouping may have a privy, raised earthen tent pad
- Each tent site in the grouping will be posted to prohibit open fires
- The kitchen/communal area should be identified as the area where fires are allowable
- Each grouping may have a common gathering area with a fire ring, sitting logs or stones and picnic table
- The common area will be included in calculating the combined size square footage
- Separation between cooking, sleeping, and food storage areas will be consistent with Leave-No-Trace principles

## **Picnic Tables**

The APSLMP lists picnic tables as a conforming structure in lands classified as Wild Forest (APSLMP, page 37). This guidance will assist land managers in determining when the use of picnic tables is acceptable, as a management tool, at primitive tent sites on lands classified as Wild Forest.

The use of picnic tables at primitive tent sites is intended to draw users to a desired location to conduct such activities as cooking, eating and socializing. This may be done to protect resources such as water or vegetation or to protect the visual aesthetics, especially for water sites. The placement of picnic tables at primitive tent sites in Wild Forest should occur only for resource protection reasons.

The following evaluation will may be used by managers to help determine if a picnic table at a primitive tent site is appropriate:

1. Describe the situation that may prompt an action and describe how the action will address a problem or issue. This description should include current conditions on the site, impacts to resources such as water bodies or wetlands, impacts to visitor experience, etc.
2. Describe alternative measures that could be undertaken to resolve the issue(s). Alternatives may include closing/relocating sites where practical, use of native materials to draw use to desired locations, etc.
3. If step 2 identifies the use of a picnic table as the minimum tool needed to address the issue, a picnic table can exist within the primitive tent site.

4. If step 2 identifies a picnic table not contributing to resource protection, it will be removed.
5. Describe management requirements for minimizing effects of this action (placements, screening, etc.).
6. Describe future monitoring schedules to determine if the action has led to a desired outcome.

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## **Appendix A.**

### **Accessible Guidance for New or Rehabilitated Primitive Tent Sites**

When creating a new PTS or altering an existing PTS, the Department will use standards found within the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA). An alteration is defined as remodeling, renovating, rehabilitating, reconstructing, changing or rearranging structural parts or elements, changing or rearranging plan configuration of walls and full-height or other fixed partitions, or making other changes that affect (or could affect) the usability of the facility.

DEC recognizes that the U.S. Access Board intends to create standards that will apply to lands not covered by these regulations and will make appropriate changes to this document based on those future standards. Therefore, the purpose of this guidance is to give direction to Department staff on how to make campsites and associated outdoor facilities accessible.

When PTS's are grouped together as part of a zone during the UMP process, not all of the PTS in a zone need to provide accessibility features, though it is encouraged. Single sites, however, should be developed to meet the accessible standards and designated as such.

If there are no PTS where accessibility features can be provided an exemption form must be completed and the reasons for the decision must be documented. The purpose of this form is to exempt certain aspects of a site and should be rarely used to exempt a whole PTS. Planners are encouraged to make everything in the program as accessible as possible.

In order to comply with U.S. Access Board standards, the facility must provide:

- 1) a designated parking spot that has an accessible route to the desired program or service;
- 2) an accessible bathroom, if public bathrooms are provided; and,
- 3) signage indicating accessibility.

To ensure the entire program and not just the tent site is accessible, the guidelines provided below should be used. The source of these guidelines is the *2014 DEC Standard Accessible Designs for Outdoor Recreational Facilities*. The designs and resources in the guidebook may serve as a resource for installation of the improvements listed below. Project designers are encouraged to exceed the minimal requirements set forth in this guidance.



### Parking:

Vehicle Parking Standards	
Parking space (signage needed)	
1 car parking space width	192" (96" Car space, 96" Aisle Space)
Van (labeled "van accessible") Width	132" or 96" if beside an access aisle of 96"
Vertical clearance	98"
Signage (appropriate accessibility symbol)	60" - 84" above ground
Recreational vehicle width	20', 16' if 2 adjacent
Access aisle (labeled with no parking)	
Width	96"
Slope	<2.08%
Vertical clearance	98"

When a parking lot is provided, there must be the appropriate number of accessible parking spaces. The slope of the surface of parking spaces and pull-up spaces should not be steeper than 1:48 in any direction, with the following exception: where the surface is other than asphalt, concrete, or boards, slopes not steeper than 1:20 can be allowable when necessary for drainage.

An outdoor access route will lead from the parking lot to the campsite. The vehicle overhang will not obstruct the clearance width of the accessible route; this can be achieved by using wheel stops.

### Accessible Parking Spaces needed:

Total Number of parking spaces:	Minimum number of required accessible parking spaces including van space:	Minimum number of required van accessible parking spaces:
1 to 25	1	1
26 to 50	2	1
51 to 75	3	1
76 to 100	4	1

101 to 150	5	1
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### Outdoor Access Route Standards:

Outdoor Access Route Standards	
Minimum tread width Except where 36" not possible	36" 32" for a distance of no more than 24" (no less than 48" between exceptions)
Passing spaces (when clearance width <60", at intervals of 200')	60"×60" or "T" with 48" extensions
Maximum slope	5% for any distance, resting intervals every 200' 5-8.33% for no more than 50' 8.33-10% for no more than 30'
Cross slope Concrete, asphalt, boards Other surfaces	2.08% 5%
Minimum turn radius Around element <48"	60" 48" clearance width
Obstacles Concrete, asphalt, boards Other surfaces	½" 1"
Maximum protrusion for objects with leading edges 27-80" above the ground	4"
Openings (in surface)	<½"

When the width of the access route is less than 60 inches, a passing space will be provided every 200 feet. For trails that are connected to a motor-vehicle way, a clear passage space of 32 inches will be provided around or through the roadway barriers. If an obstacle will cross the full width of the access route, staff should try to separate the two by at least 48 inches.

### Campsites:

Tent pads	
Tent pad Dimensions	
Width	144"
Length	144"
Tent platform dimensions	
Width	144"
Length	168"

Height	<19"
Clear space around pad and platform	48"
Slope surface	
Asphalt, concrete, boards	2.08%
Other surfaces	5%
<b>Camp shelter</b>	
Parallel clear ground space	36"×48"
Slope surface	
Asphalt, concrete, boards	2.08%
Other surfaces	5%
Height	<19"
Turning space	
Circular	60" diameter
T-Shape	60" square with 36" arms and base. 12" of clear space around. 24" for base (minimum)
<b>Fire rings</b>	
Size on all usable sides of ring	48"×48"
Ring size	36-48"
Fire building surface height	9"
Depth of raised edges	<10"

The ground surface should be firm and stable, but allow for a stake and other securements to puncture the ground. When applicable, one full side of clear, unobstructed ground, should adjoin or overlap with a recreational access path or space. For campsites that are accessible and have driveways leading to them, the driveways shall not exceed an 8.33 percent grade for a distance of more than 50 feet. A 10 percent slope for 30 feet is acceptable, while the same slope over a length of 50 feet is only permissible if a pre-existing driveway is being altered. If campsites are being designated through the use of a zone, the minimal number of accessible campsites must be developed, but staff is encouraged to exceed the minimum requirements and make all sites as accessible as possible. When a site has been made fully accessible, it will be identified on maps, kiosks, the Department website, and with proper signage at the site. These sites will be identified so individuals with disabilities can easily locate them. The sites will not be designated for exclusive use by individuals with disabilities, but instead will be available on a first-come, first-served basis like the rest of the sites. The Department can designate and reserve accessible sites for exclusive use if it is found that individuals with disabilities are regularly unable to find and utilize open, accessible sites in a given zone. Once a site has been designated for exclusive use, 6 CRR-NY Section 190.3(f) states that only an individual with a disability

is allowed to use that site.

#### Accessible Campsite needed:

Total number of camping sites provided in facility	Minimum number of accessible camping sites required.
1	1
2 to 25	2
26 to 50	3
51 to 76	4
76 to 100	5
101 to 150	7
151 to 200	8
Over 200	8, plus 2 percent of the number of sites over 200

#### Accessible Privies:

Accessible Pit Privies	
Privy Structure	
Width	60"
Length	66"
Turning Space	
Arm	60" x 36"
Base	36" x 24"
Grab Bars	
Diameter	1.25 " – 1.5 "
Space between bar and wall	1.5 "
Grab bar behind water closet	
Length	36" min.
Height above floor	33" – 36"
Grab bar to side of water closet	
Length	42" min
Height above floor	33" – 36"
Seat	
Center line	16" – 18"
Height	17" – 19"
Length	28"
Width	18"

Toilet paper dispenser	19" min (from ground)
Door	
Door Width	3'
Door way clear opening	32"
Door opening (leads to landing)	90°
Door level landing	
Door pull (on the inside by the hinges)	5'x5' 8" from door edge, 36" above floor
<b>Primitive Privies</b>	
Pit frame	
Length	52"
Width	28"
Privy Box	
Height	18"
Width	25"
Length	28.5"
Rails	
Back (total length)	39.5"
Extension from frame	10"
Side (total length)	58"
Extension from frame	12"
Seat	
Handle	2" x 2" x 22"
Space between handle and seat	1"

When a privy is connected to an accessible route, a 60 inch x 60 inch clear space will be provided. The incline to the landing will be within regulations and all normal requirements for a privy will be met along with the above dimensions.

## **Appendix B.**

## **Accessible Guidance for Picnic Tables**

When adding or replacing a picnic table at a campsite, accessibility needs to be considered. Not all picnic tables need to be accessible when there are more than two campsites located next to each other. In these cases, two must be accessible and then 20 percent of any additional picnic tables must be accessible. If the campsites are not within a zone, each site must have an accessible table.

<b>Picnic Table</b>	
Wheelchair Space	30" x 48" min.
Knee Space	
Width	30" min.
Depth	19"
Space between the bottom of the table top and ground/floor	28" min. – 34" max.
Toe Clearance (beyond knee space depth)	5" min.
Clear Space	
Clear space surrounding the table	36" min.
Forward maneuvering	36" x 48"
Parallel maneuvering	30" x 60"
Ground surface slope	
Asphalt, Concrete, or Boards	2% max.
surface	5% max.
Other surfaces	

Accessible Picnic Tables and Wheelchair Spaces needed:

<b>Table length</b>	<b>Number of wheelchair spaces</b>
≤9 ft	1
10-20 ft	2

## **Appendix C. Determination of Exemptions From Accessibility Requirements For New Construction/Rehabilitation Projects**

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## DETERMINATION OF EXEMPTIONS FROM ACCESSABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION/REHABILITATION PROJECTS

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requires that new construction and alteration projects are designed to be accessible to people with disabilities. Departures from ADA requirements recognize the existence of constraints and limitations in the outdoor environment, and are allowed for in situations where terrain and other factors make compliance impracticable. Exemptions apply only to specific areas where condition(s) for departure exist. Accessibility standards must be returned to beyond the specific point of departure. See 28 CFR 35.151 for construction mandates for structures covered in the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design such as boating and fishing sites.

Staff are expected to consider all design options and seek technical assistance from the Regional or Division ADA Coordinator to ensure that a departure is appropriate. Exemptions should only be considered after all other design options are thoroughly explored. This form documents the basis for a departure from ADA requirements. If an entire trail is exempt from accessibility standards, please use an "Entire Trail Exemption Form" form to document those conditions. Separate exceptions in ABA 1017.2 pertain to circumstances where it is determined that an entire trail is unable to comply with the accessibility standards.

**Project Name:**

**Unit Name(s):**

**Region:**

**Project Manager:**

**Project Description:**

**Does this project include:**

New construction

Alterations to existing facility

**Accessible programs/ amenities currently provided at this site:**

Parking

Walking

Biking

Picnic Tables

Grill/ Fire Ring

Audiovisual Programs

Exhibits

Waysides

Large Scale Map

Wayfinding Signs

Cultural Landscape

Special Events

Kiosks

Campsite Signs/Markers

Camping- Tent

Hiking

Overlook

Boating

Other:



The following "Conditions for Exceptions" are taken from Chapter 10 of the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA), which provides standards for certain outdoor recreation facilities not covered in the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. They allow for a point of departure from the required standard when a specific condition appears. Descriptions of the "Conditions for Exception" and their permissible uses are found in ABA 1019.

Note that there is no exemption for outdoor recreation access routes to new construction. The terrain and general accessibility of the natural setting should be part of the site selection process.

**Area of departure (attach map or drawing):**

**Need for departure (check all that apply and provide an attached narrative):**

Compliance is not practical due to terrain.

Compliance cannot be accomplished with prevailing construction practices.

Compliance would fundamentally alter the nature of the program offered or the function or purpose of the facility or setting.

Compliance is limited or precluded by any of the following laws, or by decisions or opinions issued or agreements executed pursuant to any of the following laws:

- Endangered Species Act;
- State Environment Quality Review (SEQR) or National Environmental Policy Act;
- National Historic Preservation Act;
- Wilderness Act; or
- Other federal, state, or local law the purpose of which is to preserve threatened or endangered species; the environment; or archaeological, cultural, historical, or other significant natural features.

\_\_\_\_\_  
REGIONAL PROGRAM MANAGER SIGNATURE

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
REGIONAL ADA COORDINATOR SIGNATURE

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
NATURAL RESOURCE SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
CENTRAL OFFICE BUREAU CHIEF SIGNATURE

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by Division ADA Coordinator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_