

**COVER SHEET
and
NOTICE OF COMPLETION
of
FINAL SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (FSEIS)
MAP AMENDMENT 2020-01 (Town of North Elba)**

NAME OF LEAD AGENCY AND PREPARER OF FSEIS:

NYS Adirondack Park Agency
Post Office Box 99
Ray Brook, NY 12977

PROJECT LOCATION:

Town of North Elba
Essex County

PROPOSED ACTION:

Amendment to the Official Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map in the Town of North Elba, Essex County (Map Amendment 2020-01) to reclassify approximately 34.5 acres pursuant to the Adirondack Park Agency Act, Section 805(2)(c)(1) from Moderate Intensity Use to Hamlet.

AGENCY CONTACT FOR INFORMATION AND/OR COPIES OF FSEIS:

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DATE OF ACCEPTANCE OF FSEIS BY LEAD AGENCY:

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Proposed Action

The Town of North Elba has requested an amendment to the Official Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map (APLUDP Map) to reclassify certain lands in the Town from Moderate Intensity Use to Hamlet. The requested area is approximately 34.5 acres and consists of two private parcels of land. The APLUDP Map uses a specific set of criteria for regional boundaries to delineate land use classification areas and cannot use private property boundaries that do not meet that criteria. This document examines three possible geographic alternatives that use regional boundaries.

DRAFT

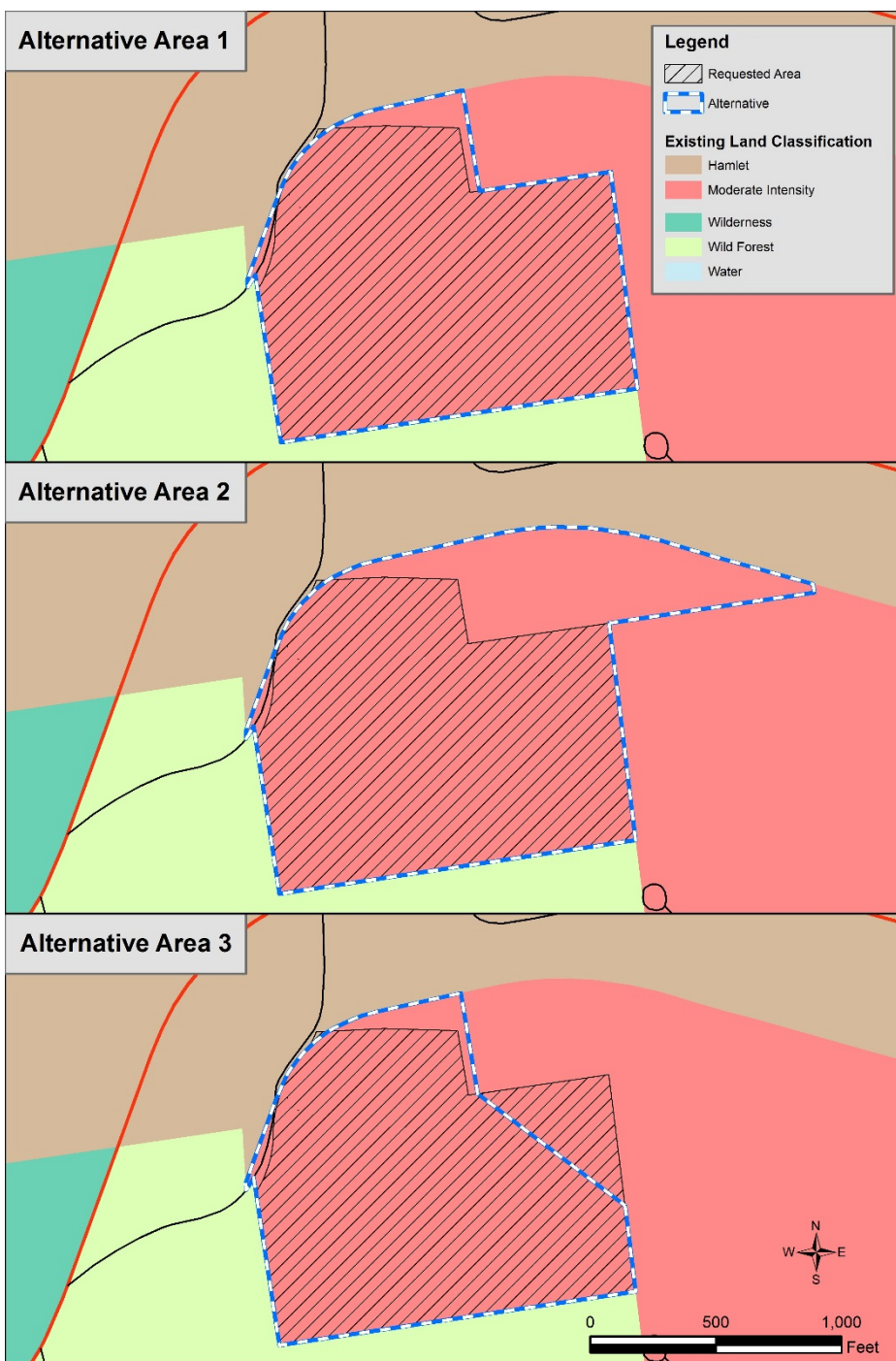


Figure 1. Map showing the three alternative map amendment areas.

Alternative Area 1 is 35.2 acres in size and is the alternative that most closely matches the Town's request. Alternative Area 1 includes all of the requested map amendment area as well as some additional Moderate Intensity Use lands in order to use regional boundaries. Due to the presence of steep slopes, Alternative Area 1 is not the preferred alternative.

Alternative Area 2 is approximately 44.3 acres and includes additional adjacent Moderate Intensity Use lands that have been divided into smaller lots, similar to the intensity of the adjacent Hamlet area. However, due to the presence of steep slopes and wetlands, Alternative Area 2 is not the preferred alternative.

Alternative Area 3 is 32.0 acres in size and is the smallest area under consideration. Alternative Area 3 is similar to Alternative Area 1 except that it excludes a 3.2 acre portion of the requested area that contains steep slopes abutting a large wetland area. Reclassifying Alternative Area 3 as Hamlet is the Preferred Alternative.

Purpose, Public Need and Benefits

The Town of North Elba stated in its application that in the 47 years since 1973 when the original Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map was adopted, Lake Placid has experienced substantial residential and commercial development. The Town anticipates that the requested amendment would accommodate the continued necessary and natural expansion of development in Lake Placid.

Procedures under SEQRA

This Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) analyzes the environmental impacts which may result from Agency approval of this proposed map amendment. The Official Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map (the Map), identified in § 805(2)(a) of the APA Act, is the primary component of the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan, which guides land use planning and development of private land in the Adirondack Park.

Pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (Environmental Conservation Law, Article 8) and APA Act §§ 805(2)(c)(1) and 805(2)(c)(2), the Agency accepted a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) on April 22, 2020, held a 30-day public comment period which concluded on May 30, 2020, and held a combined public hearing on both the proposed map amendment and the DSEIS on May 15, 2020. Approximately twelve people participated in the hearing electronically. This FSEIS includes the hearing summary, public comments and responses, and the written analysis by Agency staff. The Agency must decide whether to accept the FSEIS. Once the FSEIS is accepted, the Agency may approve the map amendment request, approve an alternative, or deny the request.

Standards for Agency Decision

The Agency's decision on a map amendment request is a legislative function based upon the application, public comment, FSEIS, and staff analysis. The public hearing is for informational purposes and is not conducted in an adversarial or quasi-judicial format. The burden rests with the applicants to justify the changes in land use area classification. Future map amendments may be made when new information is developed or when conditions which led to the original classification change.

Procedures and standards for the official map amendment process are found in:

- a) APA Act Section 805;
- b) Adirondack Park Agency Rules and Regulations (9 NYCRR Subtitle Q) Part 583;
- c) Appendix Q-8 of the Adirondack Park Agency Rules and Regulations;
- d) Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement: The Process of Amending the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map, August 1, 1979 (FGEIS).

Section 805 (2) (c) (1) of the APA Act provides in pertinent part:

The Agency may make amendments to the Plan Map in the following manner:

Any amendment to reclassify land from any land use area to any other land use area or areas, if the land involved is less than twenty-five hundred acres, after public hearing thereon and upon an affirmation vote of two-thirds of its members, at the request of any owner of record of the land involved or at the request of the legislative body of a local government.

Section 805 (2) (c) (5) of the APA Act provides in pertinent part:

Before making any plan map amendment...the Agency must find that the reclassification would accurately reflect the legislative findings and purposes of section eight hundred-one of this article and would be consistent with the land use and development plan, including the character description and purposes, policies and objectives of the land use area to which reclassification is proposed, taking into account such existing natural, resource, open space, public, economic and other land use factors and any comprehensive master plans adopted pursuant to the town or village law, as may reflect the relative development, amenability and limitations of the land in question. The Agency's determination shall be consistent with and reflect the regional nature of the land use and development plan and the regional scale and approach used in its preparation.

The statutory purposes, policies and objectives and the character descriptions for land use areas established by § 805 of the APA Act are shown on the Official Map and set out in Appendix B.

APA Regulation Section 583.2 outlines additional criteria:

- a) In considering map amendment requests, the agency will refer to the land use area classification determinants set out as Appendix Q-8 of these regulations and augmented by field inspection.*
- b) The agency will not consider as relevant to its determination any private land development proposals or any enacted or proposed local land use controls.*

Land use area classification determinants from Appendix Q-8 of APA Rules & Regulations are attached to this document as Appendix C. These land use area classification determinants define elements such as natural resource characteristics, existing development characteristics and public considerations and lay out land use implications for these characteristics.

The requested map amendment is examined in comparison to the statutory purposes, policies and objectives and the character descriptions for the proposed Hamlet classification, using the factual data which follow. It is these considerations which govern the Agency decision in this matter. Character descriptions, purposes, policies and objectives for land use areas (Appendix B of this document) are established by Section 805 of the APA Act and summarized below.

Resource Management areas (shown as green on the Map) are those lands where the need to protect, manage and enhance forest, agricultural, recreational and open space resources is of paramount importance because of overriding natural resource and public considerations. Open space uses, including forest management, agriculture and recreational activities, are found throughout these areas. Many resource management areas are characterized by substantial acreages of one or more of the following: shallow soils, severe slopes, elevations of over twenty-five hundred feet, flood plains, proximity to designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, wetlands, critical wildlife habitats or habitats of rare and endangered plant and animal species. Resource Management areas will allow for residential development on substantial acreages or in small clusters on carefully selected and well-designed sites. The overall intensity guideline for Resource Management is 15 principal buildings per square mile, or 42.7 acres per principal building.

Rural Use areas (yellow on the Map) are characterized by substantial acreages of one or more of the following: fairly shallow soils, relatively severe slopes, significant

ecotones, critical wildlife habitats, proximity to scenic vistas or key public lands. These areas are frequently remote from existing hamlet areas or are not readily accessible. Consequently, these areas are characterized by a low level of development that are generally compatible with the protection of the relatively intolerant natural resources and the preservation of open space. These areas and the resource management areas provide the essential open space atmosphere that characterizes the park. Residential and related development and uses should occur on large lots or in relatively small clusters on carefully selected and well-designed sites. The overall intensity guideline for Rural Use is 75 principal buildings per square mile, or 8.5 acres per principal building.

Low Intensity Use areas (orange on the Map) are areas that are readily accessible and in reasonable proximity to Hamlet. These areas are generally characterized by deep soils and moderate slopes, with no large acreages of critical biological importance. Where these areas are located near or adjacent to Hamlet, clustering development on the most developable portions of these areas makes possible a relatively high level of residential development and local services. It is anticipated that these areas will provide an orderly growth of housing development opportunities in the Park at an intensity level that will protect physical and biological resources. The overall intensity guideline for Low Intensity Use is 200 principal buildings per square mile, or 3.2 acres per principal building.

Moderate Intensity Use areas (red on the Map) are areas where the capability of natural resources and anticipated need for future development indicate that relatively intense development is possible, desirable and suitable. These areas are located near or adjacent to Hamlets to provide for reasonable expansion and along highways and accessible shorelines where existing development has established the character of the area. Moderate Intensity Use areas where relatively intense development does not exist are characterized by deep soils on moderate slopes and readily accessible to Hamlets. The overall intensity guideline for Moderate Intensity Use is 500 principal buildings per square mile, or 1.3 acres per principal building.

Hamlet areas (brown on the Map) range from large, varied communities that contain a sizeable permanent, seasonal and transient populations with a great diversity of residential, commercial, tourist and industrial development and a high level of public services and facilities, to smaller, less varied communities with a lesser degree and diversity of development and a generally lower level of public services and facilities. Hamlet areas will serve as the service and growth centers in the park. They are intended to accommodate a large portion of the necessary and natural expansion of the park's housing, commercial and industrial activities. In these areas, a wide variety of housing, commercial, recreational, social and professional needs of the park's permanent, seasonal and transient populations will be met. The building intensities that may occur in such areas will allow a high and desirable level of public and institutional services to be economically feasible. Because a hamlet is concentrated in character

and located in areas where existing development patterns indicate the demand for and viability of service and growth centers, these areas will discourage the haphazard location and dispersion of intense building development in the park's open space areas. These areas will continue to provide services to park residents and visitors and, in conjunction with other land use areas and activities on both private and public land, will provide a diversity of land uses that will satisfy the needs of a wide variety of people. The delineation of hamlet areas on the plan map is designed to provide reasonable expansion areas for the existing hamlets, where the surrounding resources permit such expansion. Local government should take the initiative in suggesting appropriate expansions of the presently delineated hamlet boundaries, both prior to and at the time of enactment of local land use programs. There are no overall intensity guidelines for Hamlet Areas.

Environmental Setting

Location

The map amendment area is located approximately 0.75 mile west of the Village of Lake Placid, south of NYS Route 86. Figure 2 is a map showing the general location of the area under consideration for this action.

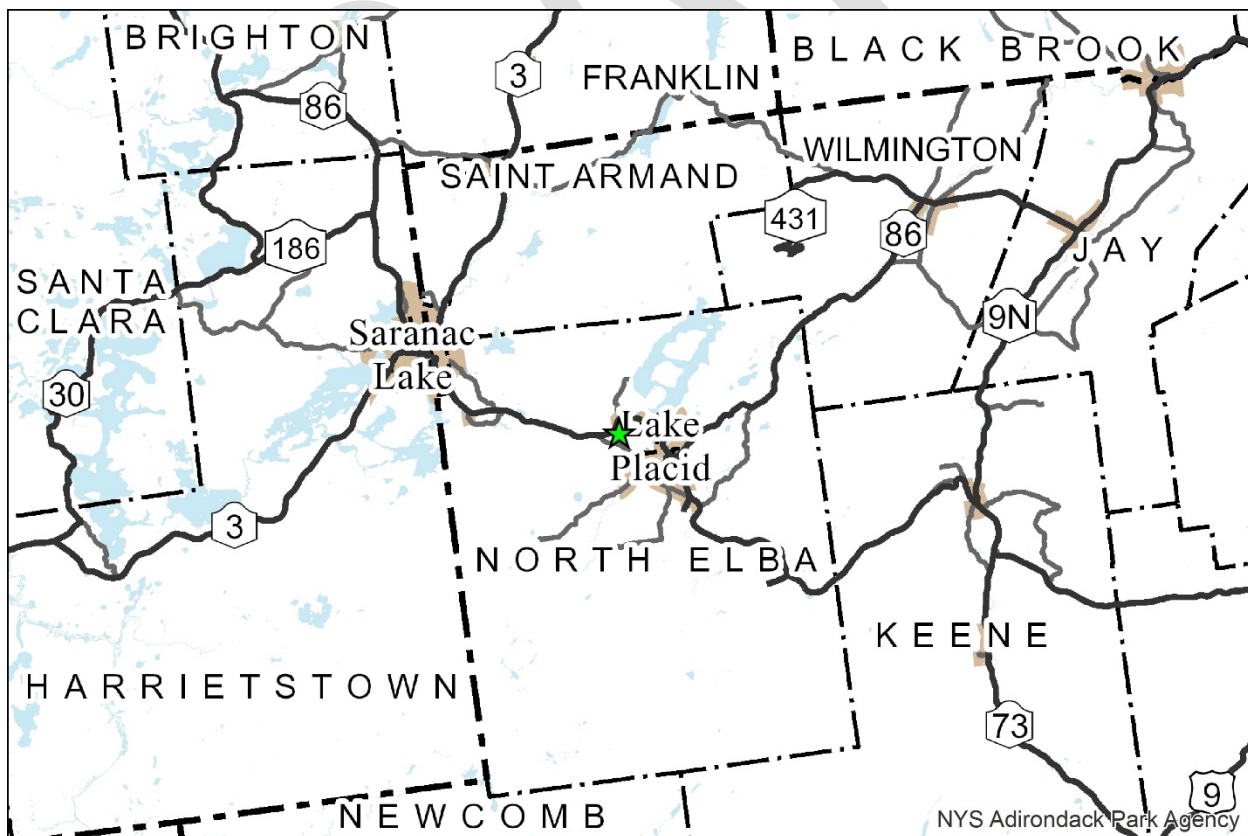


Figure 2. Map showing the general location of the map amendment area.

Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map

The Town of North Elba is approximately 98,552 acres in size, including water bodies. Table 1 shows the how the land is currently classified pursuant to the Official Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map.

Land Classification	Acreage
Hamlet	2,236.3
Moderate Intensity Use	1,072.5
Low Intensity	3,633.0
Rural Use	5,197.0
Resource Management	7,568.9
State Land	

Table 1. Approximate acreage of land use classifications in the Town of North Elba. There are approximately 391 acres of NYS Conservation Easements on private lands in the Town of North Elba.

The area under consideration is currently classified as Moderate Intensity Use, a portion of an approximately 320-acre Moderate Intensity Use area located on the west side of the Village of Lake Placid. It is bounded by Moderate Intensity Use to the east, Hamlet on the north, and State land (Saranac Lakes Wild Forest) on the south and west. The existing regional boundary between Hamlet and Moderate Intensity Use is a one-tenth mile (528 ft) setback from the centerline of NYS Route 86. The three alternative areas use Great Lot boundaries and setbacks from Great Lot boundaries as regional boundaries. Figures 3 and 4 are maps showing the map amendment area with the current classifications on the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map at two scales.

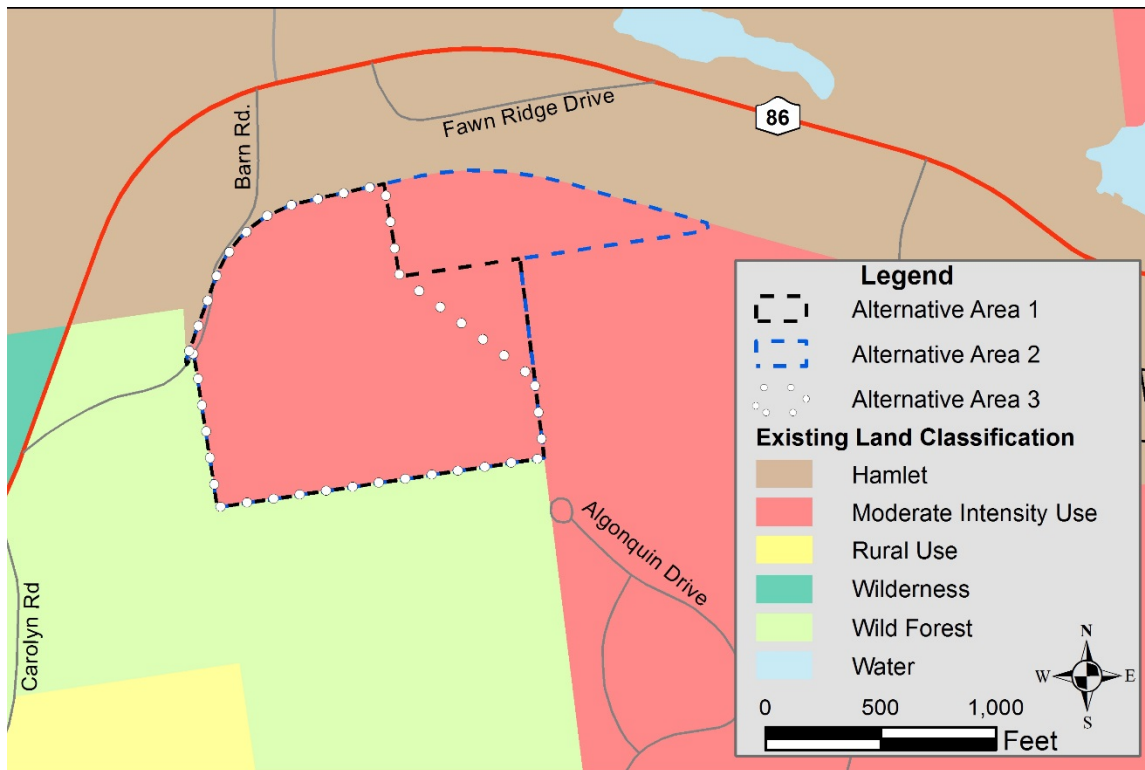


Figure 3. Map showing the three alternative map amendment areas and the current classification on the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map and State Land Master Plan.

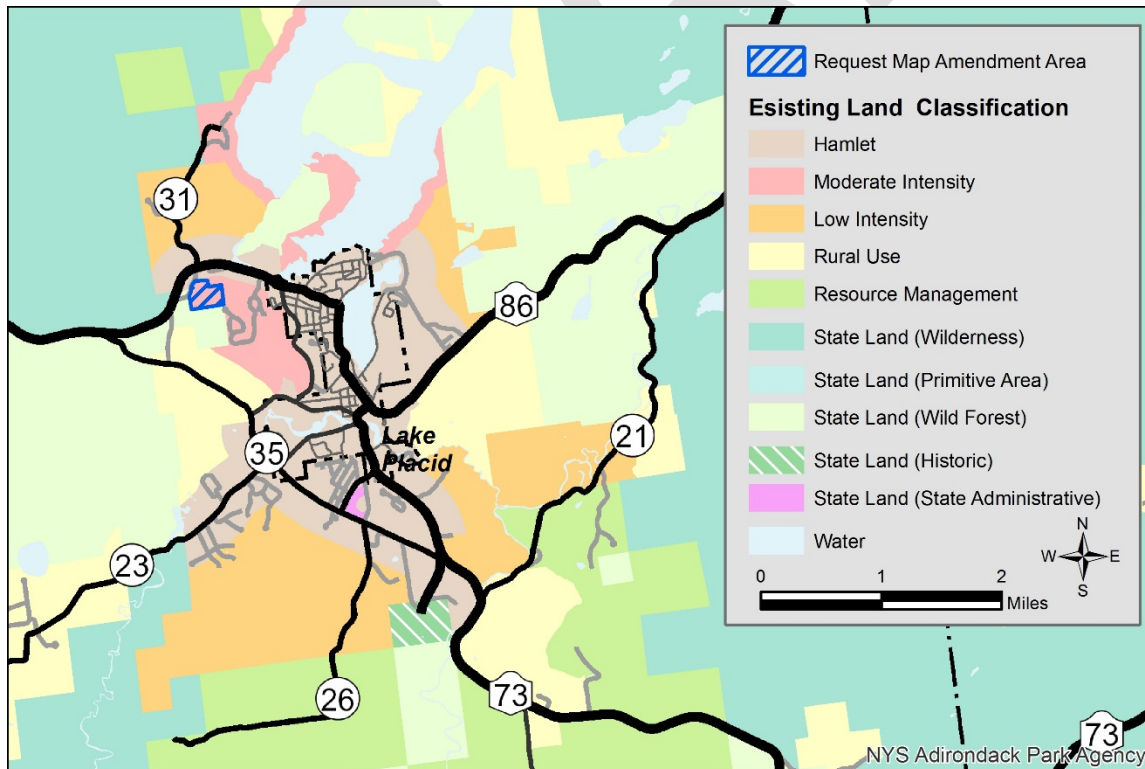


Figure 4. Map showing the requested map amendment area and the current classification on the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map and State Land Master Plan.

Existing Land Use and Development

The map amendment area has approximately 600 feet of road frontage along Barn Road, a hard-surfaced Town road. Barn Road intersects NYS Route 86 in two locations. The map amendment area contains an approximately 1,000-foot long private road to access an existing structure. Figure 5 is a map showing the roads in the vicinity of the area under consideration.

Public sewer and water services are available to the area. It is located within the North Elba Consolidated Sewer District and North Elba Water District #1.

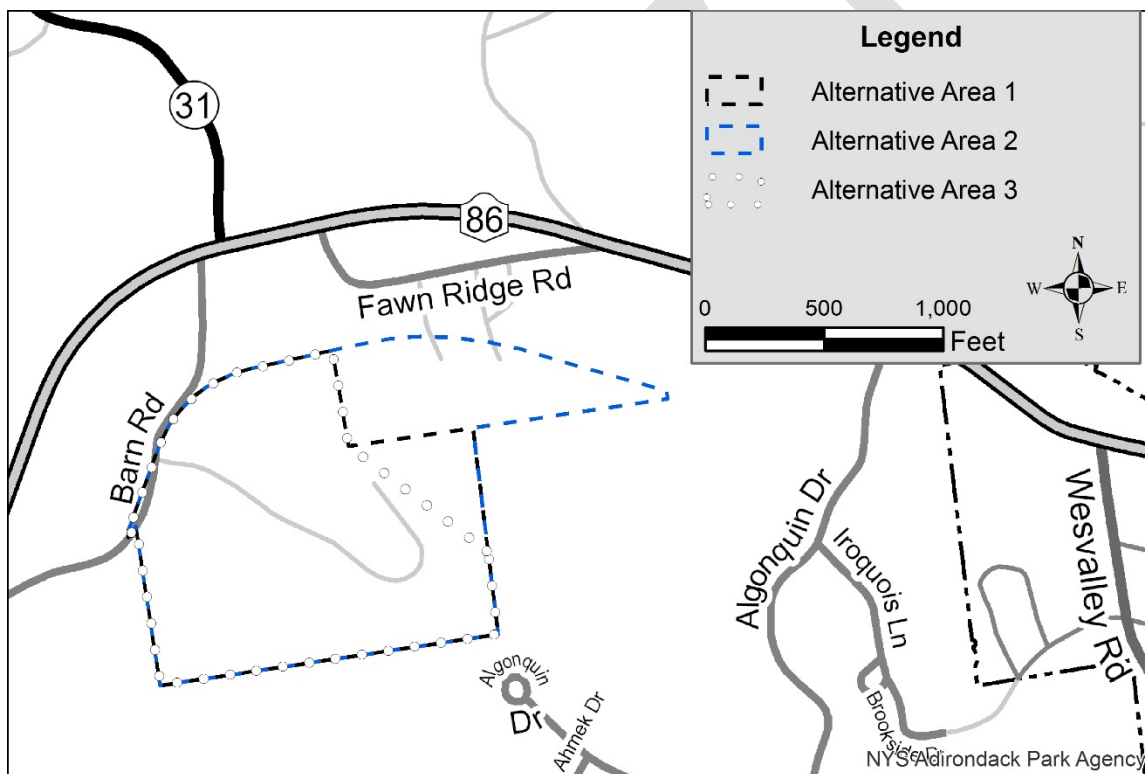


Figure 5. Map showing the roads in and around the map amendment area.

Figure 6 shows the existing land use in and around the map amendment area according to Essex County Real Property Tax Services Department and New York State Office of Real Property Services (ORPS). According to data from the County and ORPS, Alternative Area 1 consists of one industrial parcel, one vacant parcel, and portions of one commercial parcel and three residential parcels. The parcel classified as industrial contains the former W. Alton Jones Cell Science Center. Alternative Area 2 includes all of Alternative Area 1 with the addition of portions of seven residential parcels, three vacant parcels and one commercial parcel. Alternative Area 3 includes the same parcels as Alternative Area 1 but excludes approximately 3.2 acres of the industrial parcel.

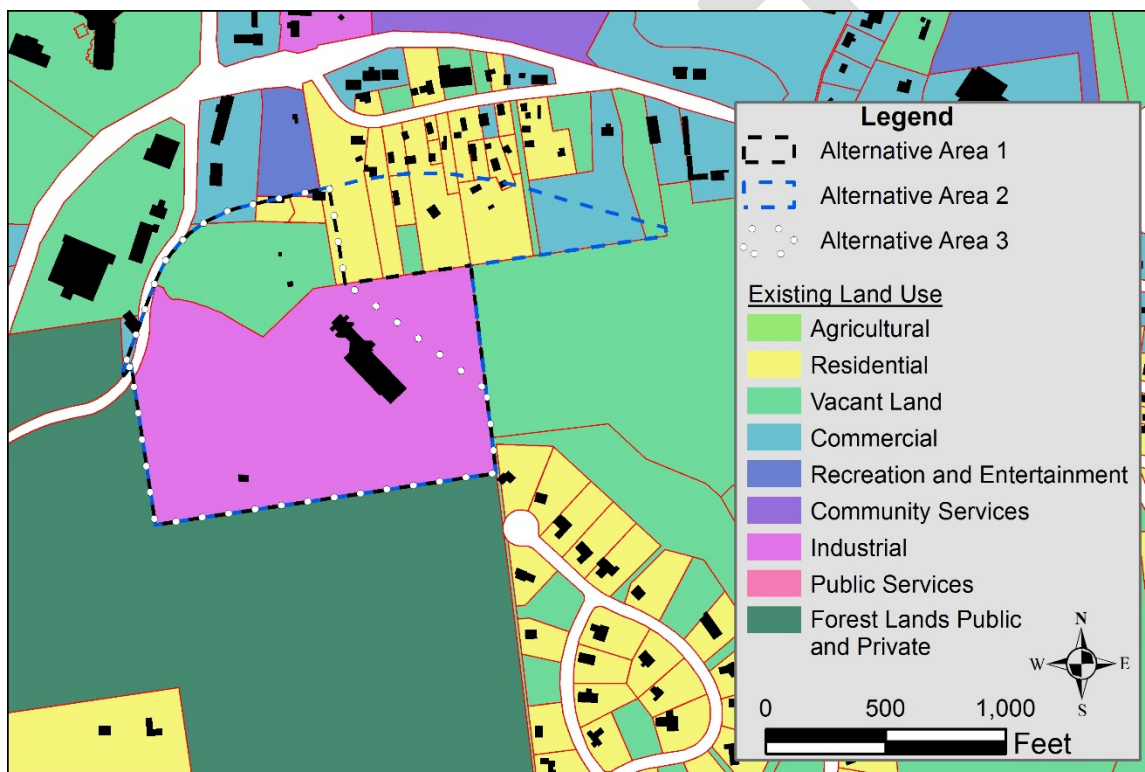


Figure 6. Map showing the existing land use according to Essex County property tax map data for the map amendment area and surrounding area.

Figure 7 is an aerial image of the area under consideration. The area contains a mix of forest, open lawn and developed areas.

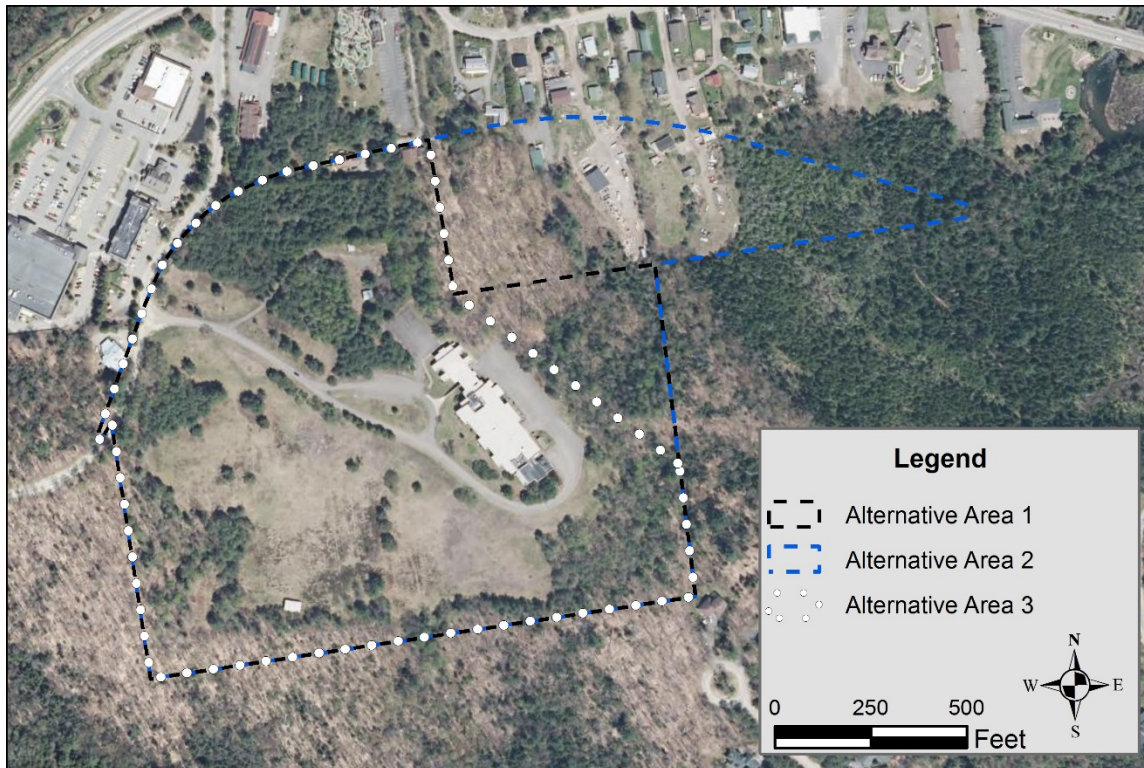


Figure 7. The three alternative map amendment areas shown on a 2017 aerial image.

Fire and rescue services are furnished by the Lake Placid Fire Department and the Lake Placid Volunteer Ambulance Service. Police protection is provided by New York State Police.

Soils

The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), in its Soils Survey for Essex County (Soil Survey), has identified five soil map units within the map amendment area. These soil map units are Monadnock fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes (MkB); Monadnock fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes (MhC); Monadnock fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very bouldery (MkC) Monadnock fine sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very bouldery (MkD); and Sunapee fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very bouldery (SnB).

Monadnock fine sandy loams are deep, well drained soils on shoulders and slopes of glaciated hillsides or mountainsides. According to the Soil Survey, these soils are generally conducive to development. Sunapee fine sandy loam are deep, moderately well drained soils located on footslopes of glaciated hillsides and mountainsides. These soils are expected to have a seasonal zone high water table of 18-25 inches. According to the Soil Survey, the shallow water table limits the capacity of the soil to bear loads without movements and can cause problems for construction of dwellings and roads.

Figure 8 shows the soil map for this area. Table 2 shows the percentage of each soil map unit in each of the three alternative areas.

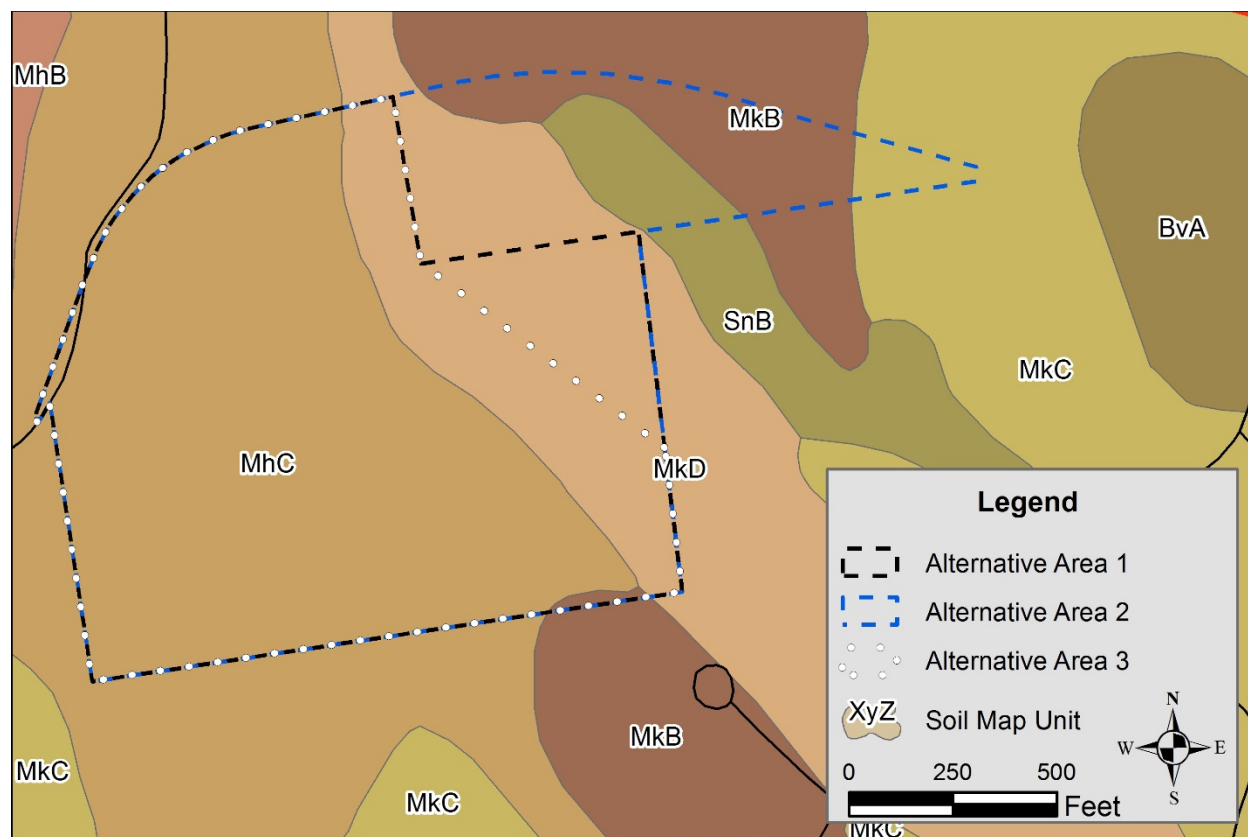


Figure 8. Map showing the Proposed Map Amendment Area and Essex County Soil Survey data.

Map Unit Symbol	Soil Map Unit Name	Drainage Class	Alternative Area 1	Alternative Area 2	Alternative Area 3
MhC	Monadnock fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Well Drained	74.5%	59.2%	82.0%
MkB	Monadnock fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very bouldery	Well Drained	0.4%	8.0%	0.5%
MkC	Monadnock fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very bouldery	Well Drained	0%	1.5%	0%
MkD	Monadnock fine sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very bouldery	Well Drained	25.0%	27.2%	17.6%
SnB	Sunapee fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very bouldery	Moderately Well Drained	0%	4.2%	0%

Table 2. Soils within the three alternative map amendment areas

This detailed soil mapping provides slope categories for each soil map unit which represent the general slope throughout a particular soil map unit. This slope category may not reflect the actual slope for the portion of a soil map unit within the map amendment area. Please refer to the Topography section below for more detailed information on slopes.

Topography

The map amendment area consists of gentle to moderate sloping upland terrain in the western portion, steep northeasterly facing slopes along the central portion, and fairly flat, lowland terrain in the eastern portion. Figure 9 and Figure 10 show the topography of the area. Figure 9 shows the topography as slope percentages and Figure 10 shows the topography with elevation contours.

Generally, slopes under 15% can support a relatively intense level of development. Construction or engineering practices that minimize erosion and siltation problems must be utilized on the steeper slopes in this range. Slopes in the 16%-25% range present substantial environmental hazards relating to erosion, siltation and construction problems. However, if rigid standards are followed, some low intensity development can take place. Slopes above 25% should not be developed as development on these slopes presents serious environmental problems. Erosion rates are greatly accelerated, which increases siltation. Development costs are likely to be high because of the special engineering techniques that must be employed. Proper grades for streets are difficult to attain and often can only be accomplished by large road cuts.

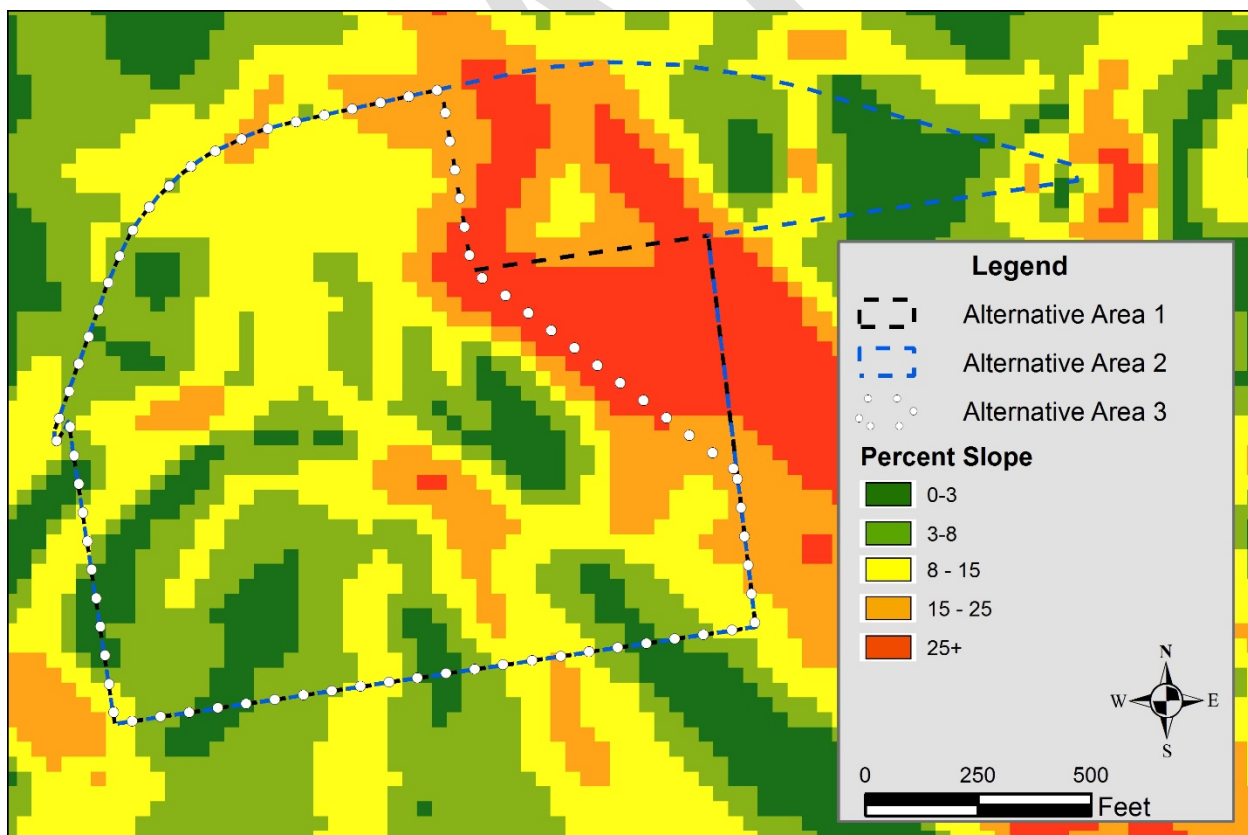


Figure 9. Map showing the slopes and the three geographic alternative map amendment areas.

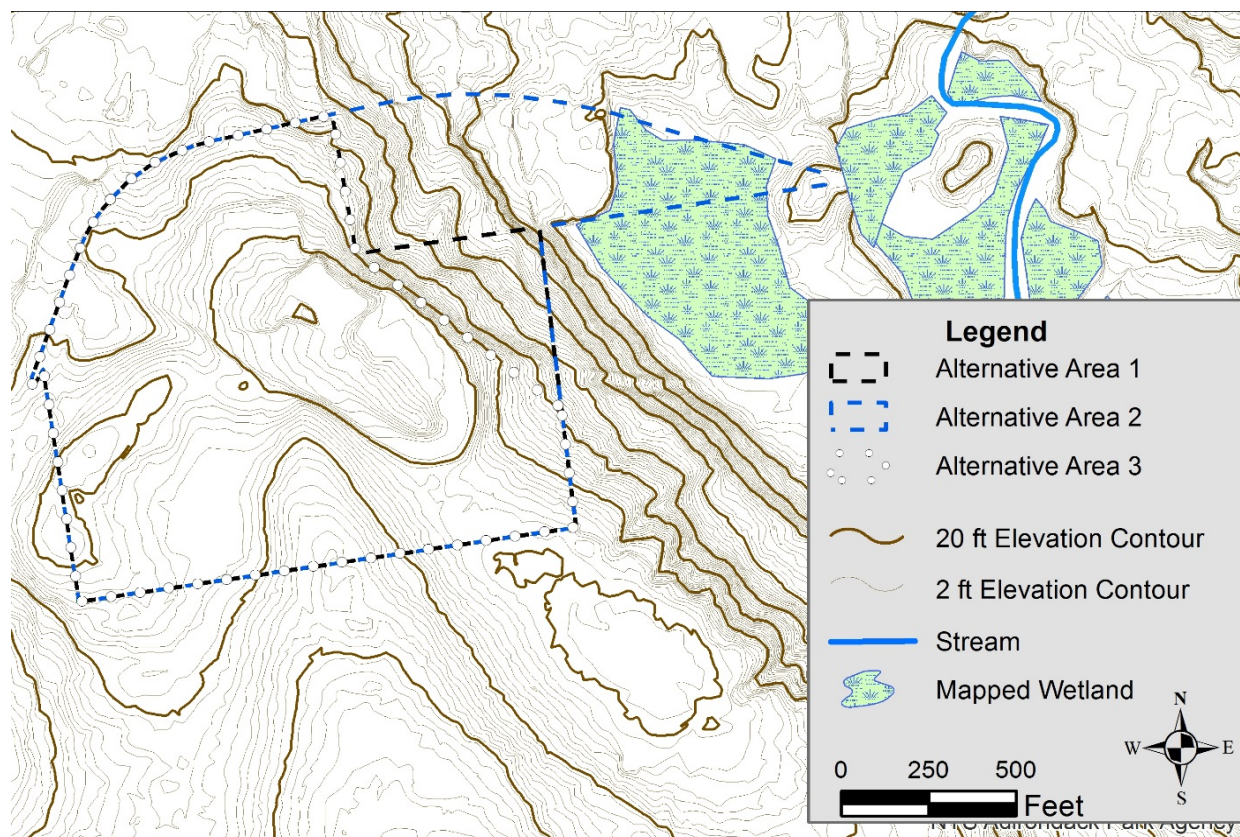


Figure 10. Map showing the three alternative map amendment areas, elevation contours, and wetlands.

Elevation in the map amendment area ranges from approximately 1,824 feet to 2,002 feet above sea level, a gain of 178 feet. Table 3 shows the percentages of each slope category for each of the three alternative map amendment areas.

Slope Range	Alternative Area 1	Alternative Area 2	Alternative Area 3
Low/Moderate Slopes (0-15%)	77.6%	72.8%	86.3%
Steep Slopes (16-25%)	12.6%	15.5%	11.2%
Severe Slopes (25%+)	9.9%	11.8%	2.5%

Table 3. Slopes within the map amendment area.

Wetlands

There are approximately 1.9 acres of wetlands in the map amendment area. These wetlands are located in Alternative Area 2, but not in Alternative Areas 1 and 3. Figure 9 shows the mapped wetlands in the map amendment area.

Water Resources

There are no major hydrological features within the map amendment area. Outlet Brook is located downslope, approximately 400 feet east of the eastern boundary of Alternative Area 2. Outlet Brook is classified by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation as a B(t) stream, which indicates that its best use is for swimming and other contact recreation, and it may support a trout population. Figure 9 is a map showing the location of this stream.

Visual Resources

The area is located south of NYS Route 86, a highway between Lake Placid and Saranac Lake. According to NYS Department of Transportation, NYS Route 86 had an Average Annual Daily Traffic count of 10,492 vehicles in 2016. Portions of the map amendment area, particularly the steep, northeasterly facing slopes, are visible from locations along NYS Route 86.

Critical Environmental Areas

The wetlands in Alternative Area 2 are Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) pursuant to the Adirondack Park Agency Act. There are no wetland CEAs in Alternative Area 1 or Alternative Area 3. All three alternatives contain approximately 0.8 acres of lands within one-eighth mile of the McKenzie Mountain Wilderness, which is also a CEA pursuant to the Adirondack Park Agency Act. Wilderness CEAs apply to all APLUDP land use classifications except Hamlet and Industrial Use. The lands between this 0.8 acre Wilderness CEA and the McKenzie Mountain Wilderness are existing Hamlet and other State land (Wild Forest). This 0.8-acre area is not part of a larger Wilderness CEA so this entire Wilderness CEA would be eliminated if the area was classified as Hamlet. Wetlands and Wilderness CEAs are not Critical Environmental Areas pursuant to SEQR regulation 6 NYCRR 617.14(g).

Biological Resources

There are no known instances of rare threatened or endangered species in the map amendment area.

Population Trends

The population of the Town of North Elba was 8,957 in 2010, an increase of 546 persons (3.4%) since 2000. Table 4 compares population growth of the Town of North Elba in both absolute and percentage terms as compared to the five surrounding towns.

	Year		Change from 2000-2010	
	2010	2000	Number	Percentage
St. Armand	1,548	1,321	227	17.2%
Wilmington	1,253	1,131	112	10.8%
Keene	1,105	1,063	42	4.0%
North Elba	8,957	8,661	546	3.4%
Harriestown	5,709	5,575	134	2.4%
Newcomb	436	481	77	-9.4%

Table 4. Population Trends for North Elba and Surrounding Towns, ranked by rate of growth (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, 2000 Census)

Potential Impacts of the Action

Storm Water Runoff

Development at intensities permitted by Hamlet could increase runoff, and associated non-point source pollution of wetlands and nearby surface waters. Such problems arise when precipitation runoff drains from the land into surface waters and wetlands. Storm water runoff may introduce substances into waters resulting in increased nutrient levels and contamination of these waters. Excessive nutrients cause physical and biological change in waters which affect aquatic life.

The volume of runoff from an area is determined by the amount of precipitation, the filtration characteristics related to soil type, vegetative cover, surface retention and impervious surfaces. An increase in development of the area would lead to an increase in surface runoff to the landscape and nearby wetlands, due to the elimination of vegetative cover and the placement of man-made impervious surfaces.

Erosion and Sedimentation

Nearby surface waters and wetlands could be impacted by activities which tend to disturb and remove stabilizing vegetation and result in increased soil erosion and sedimentation. Erosion and sedimentation may destroy aquatic life, ruin spawning areas and increase flooding potential. Sedimentation can impact wetlands by reducing productivity, altering wetland habitat and eventually leading to the loss of wetlands by infilling.

Impacts to Flora and Fauna

The proposed action to change to a less restrictive classification may lead to adverse impacts upon flora and fauna due to the potential increase in development adjacent to wetlands. An increase in development can lead to an increase in ecosystem fragmentation, degradation of habitat, and disruption of wildlife movement patterns. The pollution of surface waters, as discussed above, can also degrade wildlife habitat.

Impacts to Visual Resources

Many environmental impacts are often unnoticed in a community; however, visual changes occur rapidly and dramatically. Visual resources add a vital factor for any municipality. Whether or not people choose to visit, live or conduct business in a community depends to a great extent on their visual impression of the community.

The visual resources of Lake Placid and surrounding area define the Adirondack Park for many visitors and residents. Development placed on steeper slopes of the area without proper vegetative screening could have a negative impact on an otherwise aesthetically pleasing landscape. Development located on sections visible from the NYS Route 86 could impact the character and quality of open space associated with this resource.

Adverse Environmental Impacts That Cannot Be Avoided

Reclassification to a new land use area classification itself does not create environmental impacts. However, the development that could result may create impacts as outlined above and as specified in the FGEIS. Amendments which permit more development may lead to increased adverse environmental effects. However, the resource's tolerance and value determine the significance of these impacts. These effects can be mitigated by State and local permit requirements or mitigation measures identified in the discussion of alternatives.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Environmental Resources

Subdivision of land to smaller lots and the creation of individual building sites is a commitment of land resources. An amendment to a less restrictive classification may facilitate such commitment of resources. To the extent that development occurs as a result of a map amendment, the consequent loss of forest and open space resources and degradation of water quality are the primary irreversible commitment of resources. These potential environmental impacts are described above.

Growth-Inducing Aspects

The area is presently classified Moderate Intensity Use on the Official Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map. As stated above, the statutory overall intensity guidelines for Moderate Intensity Use allows one principal building for every 1.3 acres, while Hamlet areas have no overall intensity guidelines. Therefore, the proposed amendment would allow a potential net increase in principal buildings within the map amendment area. (See Land Area and Population, for the current land use area acreage and census information for the Town of North Elba).

If the map amendment is approved, the change in land use classification will affect regulatory thresholds related to overall intensity guidelines and compatible uses as set forth in Section 805 of the Act. Potential for development would also depend on whether an Agency permit is required pursuant to Section 810 of the Act, and constraints resulting from environmental factors.

Impacts of the Proposed Action on the Use and Conservation of Energy

Increasing the number of allowable principal buildings in the amendment area will potentially increase energy use in proportion to the number, type, and energy efficiency of principal buildings actually built.

Impacts of the Proposed Action on Solid Waste Management

An increase in the number of principal buildings (See Growth-Inducing Aspects) would lead to an increase in the amount of solid waste generated. Solid waste reduction/reuse/recycling programs could lessen disposal impacts.

Impacts of the Proposed Action of Historic Resources

The proposed map amendment will not cause any change in the quality of registered, eligible, or inventoried properties for the purposes of implementing Section 14.09 of the New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980.

Alternative Actions

Below are the alternatives that are under consideration for this action.

A. No Action

One alternative action is “no action” or denial of the request. The Agency may determine that the current classification is inappropriate for the area under consideration for a map amendment. A failure to approve any change would preserve the present pattern of regulatory control. There would be no adverse or beneficial site changes in the reasonably foreseeable future.

B. Alternative Regional Boundaries

The area requested by the applicant did not conform to the Agency's regional boundary requirement. Therefore, three geographic alternatives were considered in this document. All three alternatives use Great Lot boundaries and setbacks from Great Lot boundaries as regional boundaries.

Alternative Area 1 is 35.2 acres and is the alternative that most closely matches the Town's request. It expands the area to include some adjacent Moderate Intensity Use lands in order to use regional boundaries. This area includes 3.2 acres of steep slopes adjacent to wetlands. It is not the preferred alternative.

Alternative Area 2 is 44.3 acres in size and expands the area of consideration beyond Alternative Area 1 to include an additional 9.1 acres of Moderate Intensity Use that has been divided into smaller lots, similar to the intensity of the adjacent Hamlet area. The additional 9.1 acres contain 11 individual lots and all but one of these lots are partially in the existing Hamlet area. This alternative was considered due to the relatively intense development pattern. However, a significant portion of the 9.1 acres contains steep slopes or wetlands, both of which present severe limitations for development and are not suitable for the intensity of development that a Hamlet classification allows. Due to these development limitations, Alternative Area 2 is not the preferred alternative.

Alternative Area 3 is 33.0 acres and is similar to Alternative Area 1 but excludes approximately 3.2 acres of the area that was requested by the Town. These 3.2 acres contain a significant number of steep slopes that abut a large wetland area. Steep slopes present severe limitations for development which may lead to significant negative environmental impacts.

Preferred Alternative

The Agency has reviewed the character of the requested area and relevant land use classification determinants and determined that Alternative Area 3 meets the character description, purposes, policies and objectives of the Hamlet classification. Land use

area determinants that support the reclassification of this area as Hamlet include public sewer service, proximity and accessibility to the existing Hamlet of Lake Placid, predominantly low to moderate slopes, and no physical, biological or other characteristics that would pose limitations for development. The area is located adjacent to the existing Hamlet of Lake Placid and is readily accessible to the community via Barn Road. Approximately 86% of this area contains slopes less than 15%, and there are no wetlands in this area.

The APA Act describes the character, purposes, policies, and objectives of the Hamlet classification, stating that Hamlet land use areas are the service and growth centers of the Park. They generally have a diversity of development and high level of public services and facilities, and the delineation of Hamlet areas is intended to provide reasonable expansion areas. This map amendment would expand the existing Hamlet area, which is an existing service and growth center, and allow for a reasonable expansion that is supported by the community's services and facilities

Response to Public Comments

The Agency held an online public hearing on May 15, 2020 and the comment period concluded on May 30, 2020. Approximately twelve people were in attendance and no public comments were made at the hearing. The Agency received written six comment letters from 5 individuals and organizations. These comment letters can be found in Appendix G. Below is summary of the substantive comments and a response to those comments.

Comment: My property borders the Cell Science Center property and state land. I am worried that the developer will seek permission to put a road from the proposed development through to Algonquin Drive. My concern is that there should NOT be ingress/egress or access through Fawn Ridge. If the APA grants Hamlet status for the property is there a way to prohibit the access through Fawn Ridge?

As residents of the Fawn Ridge subdivision we would strongly oppose any future proposal to allow a second means of ingress and egress to the proposed Hamlet by connecting it to Algonquin Drive. To do so would require crossing State land currently classified as Wild Forest. This should not be permitted through a land swap or any other means.

Response: The Agency is only reviewing a proposed change in the land use classification, not a specific development proposal. There is not a process to include specific conditions, such as location of roads, in a map amendment decision.

Comment: In general, map amendments should fit within a larger comprehensive planning effort that considers and addresses community needs, natural resource impacts, the character of the surrounding landscape, and impacts to adjoining properties, especially when state lands are involved. The APLUDP “insures that contemporary and projected future pressures on the park resources are provided for within a land use control framework which recognizes not only matters of local concern but also those of regional and state concern.” While not a part of a formal planning process, we ask the APA and Town to view this amendment through a comprehensive planning lens to consider how such an action will influence surrounding resources and development into the future.

Response: The consideration of land use area determinants help the Agency identify areas that are physically capable of sustaining development, existing developments patterns that indicate the types of growth that are viable, and public consideration which help identify areas that should protected in order to preserve the open space character of the Park. The FSEIS identifies potential impacts of the proposed map amendment on the character and natural resources, including adjacent lands.

Comment: [The Agency] should decide if creating more dense housing area in Lake Placid is actually good for Lake Placid. Or will Lake Placid turn into Park City, another winter Olympic town who now has thousands of housing units changing the character of the once sleepy skiing town.

Response: The APA Act aims to insure the optimum overall conservation, protection, preservation, development and use of the unique resources of the Adirondack Park. The Act also provides a continuing role for local government which includes a process to request amendments to the APLUDP map. The delineation of Hamlet areas is designed to provide reasonable expansion areas for the existing hamlets, where the surrounding resources permit such expansion.

Comment: This proposal marks a substantial expansion of the hamlet area around the Village of Lake Placid. When a map amendment is proposed for a single ownership or small acreage, such as in the case of the Town of North Elba in MA-2020-1, it raises concerns that the proposal is in effect an effort to “spot zone” a tract of land or pursue some kind of political favor for a landowner. Protect the Adirondacks is concerned about the process undertaken by the Town of North Elba. We believe a map amendment submission by an Adirondack town is appropriate for consideration when it is the product of a natural resource analysis and inventory as part of a larger comprehensive community planning effort, which hopefully results in an APA approved local land use program or an update/amendment to an existing locally approved plan. Such comprehensive amendments, such as that approved for the Town of Chester, among others, often sees lands reclassified to both enhance and reduce protections and development opportunities.

Response: Less restrictive classifications, such as Hamlet, often use a more precise set of boundaries in order to delineate more specific areas. Local governments can request an amendment to the APLUDP map for a single, specific area or as part of a comprehensive planning effort. The current proposal has been requested pursuant to Section 805(2)(c)(1) of the APA Act which allows for amendments requested by a landowner or local government for areas less than twenty-five hundred acres, upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Adirondack Park Agency Board members. Section 805(2)(c)(3) of the APA Act allows for local governments to request amendments that reflect a comprehensive master plan that includes a review and evaluation of the natural resource, open space, public, economic and other land use within its entire jurisdiction.

Comment: There does not seem to be sufficient justification and documentation presented for such a change including need and proposal; and, it would appear driven by the Development Team with the potential appearance of conflicts of Interest.

Response: The Agency uses natural resources characteristics, existing land use patterns and services, and public considerations to help identify areas best suited for development.

Comment: Clearly a proposal that would satisfy the envisioned housing needs for Sports Events for athletes and support personnel is legitimate but in no way requires the reclassification of 32 acres to do so. Any access to such a facility should come directly from the main travel corridor and not via state land or other residential neighborhoods or properties.

Response: The Agency is only reviewing a proposed change in the land use classification, not a specific development proposal. The location of specific future development and access roads are not under consideration at this time.

Measures to Mitigate Potential Adverse Environmental Effects

This FSEIS evaluates the reasonableness of the amendment request and the potential adverse impacts of reclassification. The statutory criteria for map amendments balance the various physical, biological, and public resource considerations and provide development opportunities in areas with tolerant resources, thereby protecting the public interest. The application of statutory criteria and evaluation of alternatives is a means to mitigate potential adverse environmental impacts.

Major Changes Made to the DSEIS

- The Proposed Action section was changed to include information about the Preferred Alternative.
- The Procedures Under SEQRA section was changed to include updated information about the DSEIS, FSEIS, Public hearing and comment period.
- The Critical Environmental Areas section was edited to recognize the presence of a Wilderness CEA.
- A Preferred Alternative section was added.
- A Response to Public Comment section was added.
- Public Hearing Summary (Appendix E) and Comment Letters Received During Comment Period (Appendix F) was added.

Studies, Reports and Other Data Sources

- New York State Environmental Conservation Law, Articles 8 and 24; New York State Executive Law, Article 27
- Soil Survey for Essex County
- United States Geological Survey Topographic map (7.5' series; scale 1:24,000)
- USGS LIDAR Data
- Air Photo Inventory, Adirondack Park Agency
- New York Natural Heritage Database
- NYS Office of Real Property Services
- Essex County Digital Tax Parcel Data
- U. S. Census Bureau
- Adirondack Park Agency Geographic Information Systems Data
- Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan
- New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation National Register Internet Application
- NYS DEC Environmental Mapper
- NYS DOT Traffic Data Viewer