



## **Memorandum in Support**

**Bill:** S.7966 by Senator Farley

A.10737 by Assembly member Englebright

**Title:** An Act approving land transactions relating to implementation of the settlement of property disputes in township 40, in the Town of Long Lake

### **The Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) Strongly Supports this Legislation.**

This legislation implements a legal settlement resolving the long-standing dispute over property ownership along the shoreline of Raquette Lake in the Adirondack Park. Property ownership in this area, known as "Township 40," has been unclear with both the state and private parties claiming ownership of over 200 land parcels. These properties had unsettled land titles because in the 1800s the properties reverted to state with a claim of unpaid taxes, missing deed records or had multiple grantees. The ownership issues have been the subject of court battles for decades until the state settled with land owners in an equitable solution for all parties by means of a constitutional amendment. The settlement involved the state relinquishing any remaining claim on the land titles, but provided for adding the 295 acre Marion River Carry to the Forest Preserve which will provide unique paddling opportunities between Blue Mountain Lake, the Eckford Chain of Lakes, and Raquette Lake.

The constitutional amendment that authorized the aforesaid settlement between the state and the landowners has already been approved by two separately elected State Legislatures and subsequently by New York State voters in 2013. To date, the state has received over \$630,000 in funds from the landowners as part of the settlement as well as additional donations of 100 acres for the Forest Preserve. As a condition for the State to relinquish all claims of title encompassed by the constitutional amendment, the Town of Long Lake must spend the said funds and ensure that the Marion River Carry parcel is deeded into the Adirondack Forest Preserve.

This legislation simply implements what has already been decided by two State Legislatures and the citizens of New York as an equitable solution to these unresolvable legal claims. We believe that the 2013 constitutional amendment and this enabling legislation results in a net benefit to the Forest Preserve.

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