

INFORMATION PACKET
For the
SAMPSON STATE PARK
DRAFT MASTER PLAN

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

October 28, 2014
6:00PM-8:00PM
Romulus Vol. Fire Department



Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Agenda

- 6:00PM-8:00PM – Open House – Staff available for questions and comments
- 6:30PM—Short presentation on the park and the Master Plan process

Introduction

The mission of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) is to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors and to be responsible stewards of our valuable natural, historic and cultural resources.

As stewards of our parks and sites, OPRHP develops facility master plans to guide the agency in response to changes in recreation patterns, to plan major infrastructure upgrades, protect natural resources or introduce a new recreation program.

The agency has developed three priority themes and initiatives that help guide its activities. These priorities are:

- Keep state parks and historic sites open, safe, affordable, and accessible.
- Increase, deepen, and improve the visitor experience.
- Fix our aging infrastructure and convert and transform New York’s parks and historic sites into a welcoming, transformative, 21st Century parks system.

The Master Plan for Sampson State Park will incorporate these initiatives to set the best course of action to preserve and utilize park resources for this and future generations.

The purpose of this public open house is to invite public participation and involvement in our planning process. Public participation will help OPRHP identify issues, concerns and alternatives, as well as determine the depth to which each of the topics is explored within the Draft Master Plan. It is important to provide public input opportunities now and throughout the planning process to ensure significant issues are identified and addressed within this planning effort.

Sampson State Park is a popular park in this part of the state distinguished by the diversity of recreation resources, tourism opportunities, spectacular views, Seneca Lake, and Finger Lakes region history and geography. This information packet and the open house are intended to provide the public with a concise overview of Sampson State Park, its setting and resources, and to provide an opportunity for public input at an early stage in the master planning process.

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Additional information can be obtained from OPRHP at:

Finger Lakes State Park Region 2221 Taughannock Road Trumansburg, NY 14886 607-387-7041	Planning Bureau Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Albany, NY 12238 518-486-2909
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Overview of the Park

Sampson State Park is a 2000-acre recreation park in the Finger Lakes Region of New York State (Figure 1). The park was established in 1960. The primary recreational activities are camping and boating on Seneca Lake. Lakefront access for passive and active water-based recreation opportunities are also popular.

Facilities:

In addition to the beautiful, panoramic views of Seneca Lake, the park offers many facilities and opportunities.

- 309 tent/trailer sites, 245 with electric hook-up and 64 non-electric sites
- Swimming area on Seneca Lake with beach
- Playgrounds
- Bicycle riding on the park roads
- Boating access to Seneca Lake at the multi-lane concrete boat launch
- Over 100 boat slips for dayuse or overnight use
- Picnic Shelter available for rent with views of the lake
- Picnic areas with tables and hibachis
- Three miles of paved scenic lakeshore trail for walking/biking
- Tennis courts, miniature golf, horseshoes, basketball and volleyball
- Fishing, jogging, geocaching and nature watching
- Sampson WWII Navy Veterans Memorial Museum

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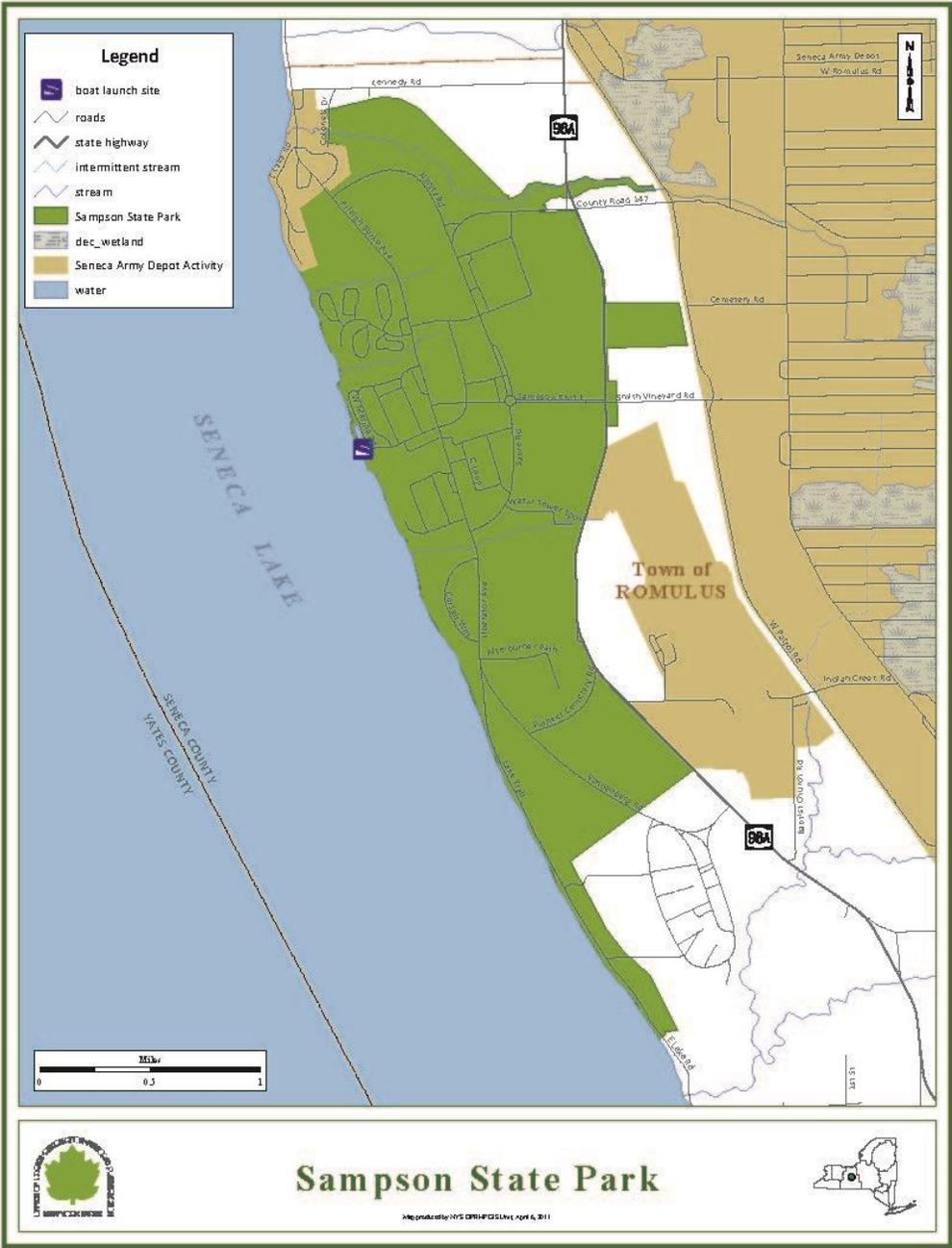


Figure 1 Sampson State Park

Environmental Setting

Cultural Resources

The Sampson WWII Veterans Memorial Museum is a tribute to Sampson’s past. Many naval items and memorabilia are on display for the public to view and learn about the days when Sampson State Park was an active Navy training ground and Air Base. Some of the buildings dating back to the Naval and Air Force training station days have been repurposed for park use.

Scenic Resources

The scenic quality of the park is dependent on views of Seneca Lake. There are views of the lake from several campsites and picnic areas scattered throughout the park. One of the more notable views is from the beach looking northwest across the lake. Scenic vistas of the lake from other areas of the park are uncommon as vegetation has grown in along the lakeshore. Elevations in Sampson State Park range from 460 to 600 feet above sea level. The park's terrain is generally flat at the lakeshore. The gently sloping terrain provides for panoramic lake views at select locations.

Environmental Resources

There are eleven distinct community types observed by the NY Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) within Sampson State Park (2003). Community types are assemblages of plants and animals that interact with one another, occupying a habitat, and often times changing the habitat. Plant communities within Sampson State Park are largely successional. The two major community types are successional red cedar woodland and successional old field/shrubland. There is one occurrence of a rare plant within the park.

Flora and Fauna

The flora within the park consists of open maintained grass fields along with successional old field/shrubland, which consist of various shrubs and early successional species. Historically, the shores of Seneca Lake consisted of oak-pine-hickory forests. Invasive shrubs consisting of Autumn olive, multiflora rose, garlic mustard, swallow-wart and bush honeysuckle are a common component of the old field vegetation in the park.

The old field and successional shrubland provide habitat for a variety of wildlife that is typical of the Finger Lakes region. A wide range of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and insect species can be observed throughout the park. Common wildlife seen in the park include white-tailed deer, wild turkey, Eastern gray squirrel, and Eastern chipmunk.

Wetlands

There are several wetlands within Sampson State Park that are part of the National Wetland Inventory.

Physical Resources

Geology, Topography and Soils

The park has typical geology and topography for the Finger Lakes region of New York State. The terrain was shaped during the last glacial period known as the Wisconsin glacial episode approximately 11,000 years ago. A vast ice sheet scoured the Devonian bedrock and meltwater from the receding glaciers accumulated forming lakes. People living in the Finger Lakes region also shaped the landscape through clearing land for farming and other development.

Receding glaciers have left the area and the park with a mix of well drained silt loam. The park is largely underlain by shale bedrock.

Water

The dominant water feature of the park is Seneca Lake. The lake is one of the largest and deepest of the Finger Lakes within the state. Fed primarily by underground springs, Seneca Lake remains ice free during the winter months and only the top ten to twenty feet warm up during the summer. There are several ravines in the park with intermittent streams that flow into the lake.

Preliminary List of Potential Topics for the Master Plan to Consider

- Recreational activities – new and existing
- Scenic Vista opportunities
- Invasive species management
- Historic and Environmental education interpretation opportunities
- Habitat restoration and management
- Vehicle and pedestrian circulation/roads/parking
- Public health and safety
- Security
- Camping
 - Number of sites, amenities, cabins, types of camping experience
- Trail System
- Marina and boat launch
- Fishing
- Nuisance Wildlife

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Next Steps

- The suggestions, issues, concerns and alternatives identified at the public open house and through written comments will be summarized and made available. The Draft Master Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement will address these issues.
- Further opportunities for public input may take place during the preparation of the draft.
- The draft will be made available for public review and will include a public hearing and public comment/review period. Comments made during this time will be considered in the preparation of the Final Master Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement.
- After the release of the final plan and a public consideration period, a Findings statement will be issued along with Commissioner's decision regarding adoption of the plan.

Written comments and suggestions will be accepted until November 21, 2014. Please send them to:

Marcus Riehl, Senior Natural Resources Planner,
Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
2221 Taughannock Road
Trumansburg, NY 14886

Or email at: sampson.plan@parks.ny.gov