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## News Release

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The Lake George Park Commission announced today that it will postpone action until its May meeting (to be announced) on a Final Environmental Impact Statement for new stream corridor regulations for the Lake's watershed. Commission Chair Bruce E. Young said that the Commission will need another month to complete a review and response to public comments and to make revisions to the regulations and the Environmental Impact Statement.

The draft regulations, which would set zones of protection limiting development along Lake George tributaries, are the subject of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and public comment period that ended March 15. "We received more than 375 public comments, many with several topics and it is going to take several more weeks to digest and respond to them," Mr. Young said. "An estimated 200 people attended the public hearings on the draft rules," Mr. Young said.

The Lake George Park Law directs the Commission to prepare stream corridor protection regulations as part of its broad mission to preserve the Lake's superior water quality. The panel of citizen members began a public planning process on stream corridors and tree cutting in 2006. More than 30 organizations and the public participated in a series of facilitated workshops about how best to manage the Lake's tributary corridors.

A significant issue that emerged during the planning phase was how wide vegetative buffers along streams need to be to protect water quality in the streams and in the Lake. "We tried and failed to reach a consensus among stakeholder organizations on the width of buffers although there is general accord that buffers offer clear benefits for water quality," said Bruce Young.

In 2008, the Commission retained the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP), a not-for-profit organization with credentials in watershed planning to help define the buffer parameters, to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and to draft the regulations. CWP first held a series of public meetings in May and June 2008 to gather more information from the organizations and individuals who had been participating in the planning process. The Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement assessing the environmental impacts of proposed

rules and evaluating alternatives was accepted by the Commission in January 2009 and a formal public comment period followed.

"It's all about striking a proper balance between environmental protection and private property interests," Mr. Young said.

After the Environmental Impact Statement is completed, the regulations will have to undergo the process of promulgation as State regulations with additional public notice and public hearings.