



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Applauds DEC's Acquisition of 525 Acres in Erie County

JIM RANNEY October 30, 2020

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Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) says he has long supported the idea of making 525 acres of property in the town of North Collins accessible to the public and is pleased that the Department of Environmental Conservation has acquired the land to create the Clear Lake Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

The property was transferred to DEC by the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH). It includes a 43-acre lake constructed in the 1920s for use as a water reservoir for the former Gowanda Psychiatric Center. It was later used by the Collins Correctional Facility. Senator Gallivan says the status of the property has been under discussion for several years.

“I am pleased that the DEC and the Office of Mental Health were able to reach an agreement on the transfer of this beautiful but unused piece of property,” Senator Gallivan said. “This new Wildlife Management Area will allow public access to the site and provide residents and families throughout the area an opportunity to visit and enjoy all that nature has to offer.”

The lake provides a habitat for a variety of wildlife and the surrounding land offers hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and other recreational opportunities. The site is a mix of forest, wetlands and open fields that are home to a variety of wildlife, including ruffed grouse, wild turkey, woodcock, white-tailed deer, beaver, muskrat, raccoon, red and gray fox, and migratory songbirds. It becomes one of more than 120 WMA's in the state and the largest Erie County.

Clear Lake WMA will be managed by DEC Region 9's Bureau of Wildlife. The area will also offer recreational activities such as hiking, kayaking, and canoeing as long as these activities do not impede or interfere with wildlife management. Activities such as swimming, camping, horseback riding, mountain biking, target shooting, or the use of motorized boats, ATVs, or snowmobiles are prohibited.

Clear Lake WMA can be accessed on the north side of Genesee Road in North Collins, west of Route 75. DEC recently installed two parking areas to improve public access to the site.

According to DEC, Clear Lake WMA will be maintained by federal funding from the Pittman Robertson Act, now known as Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, which apportions revenues

generated from the excise taxes on the sale of firearms, ammunition and archery equipment to state wildlife agencies for conservation efforts and hunter education programs.