



ADIRONDACK GROUPS SUE STATE OVER PLAN TO CONSTRUCT SNOWMOBILE BRIDGE OVER SCENIC RIVER

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Queensbury, NY – Two Adirondack environmental groups have filed a lawsuit challenging a plan by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to construct a massive new snowmobile bridge over the protected Cedar River in a remote area of the Adirondack Park.

The Cedar River is designated as a “Scenic” river under New York’s Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System Act. The suit challenges DEC’s issuance of a permit to itself for the bridge construction as violating the Act’s prohibition of motorized recreation, including snowmobiling, in Scenic river areas. The lawsuit also claims that DEC failed to conduct the required environmental review prior to issuing the permit.

DEC’s proposed bridge would be constructed of concrete and steel and be nearly 140 feet in length and 12 feet wide. The location for the proposed bridge is undeveloped, scenic, secluded, and tranquil, flanked by large hardwood and balsam fir trees, and miles from the nearest highway.

“The decision to go to court is always a decision of last resort, but the process here was deeply flawed,” said Peter Bauer, executive director of Protect the Adirondacks! “The Department of Environmental Conservation issued itself a permit and variance to approve this bridge. In consideration of this new permit the state played the roles of both applicant and reviewer. The state is violating its own laws and regulations. The new bridge is also unnecessary and redundant. Upstream of the proposed bridge there is already an existing snowmobile trail bridge over the Cedar River. This bridge is part of the Cuomo Administrations plans to significantly expand motorized uses in the public Forest Preserve.”

“We encourage and support public recreation in the Forest Preserve,” said Adirondack Wild’s David Gibson. “However, the law states that human uses are secondary and must never degrade natural resources like the Cedar River. By the state’s own actions we are forced to challenge this intensive construction for motorized uses precisely where they are not allowed.”

“If state officials can evade the law at a majestic, protected, natural setting like the Cedar River, then more than 1200 miles of protected rivers across the entire state are at risk. We go to court in order to uphold longstanding New York environmental laws that protect the ‘forever wild’ Forest Preserve and wild and scenic rivers,” Gibson said.

The lawsuit was filed in State Supreme Court in Warren County by Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve and Protect the Adirondacks! The groups are represented by Christopher Amato, Adirondack Wild’s Counsel.

A copy of the lawsuit can be found here: [Petition and Notice](#)



Site of planned steel bridge over Scenic Cedar River.

Photo © Dave Gibson

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