§ 20.01 Purpose. With the loss of natural areas through development, there is a critical need for the creation of a new designation of park land containing wildlife, flora, scenic, historical and archeological sites that are unique and rare in New York state. The commissioner may designate a system of park preserves to assure the protection of this heritage for future generations.

Furthermore, there is a need to create an additional park designation, to be known as park preservation areas, to identify and conserve portions of state parks, parkways, historic sites and recreational facilities that, although the entire facility does not qualify as a park preserve, nonetheless possess outstanding ecological values, including assemblages of flora and fauna that are unique or rare in the state. The commissioner may designate a system of park preservation areas to protect outstanding ecological values within facilities under the jurisdiction of the office that have not been designated park preserves. For administrative purposes, designated park preservation areas shall be considered a part of the park preserve system.