

THE ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

Defending the East's Last Great Wilderness



WINTER 2005

Dear Adirondack Council Members and Friends,

Dreams can come true. Last December, when the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Wangari Maathai, it was the first time an environmentalist and an African woman was recognized with the prestigious award. Maathai had realized her dream for Kenyan democracy, social equity, peace and sustainable development by planting trees in the Green Belt Movement to stop the expanding desert. She described her effort in her Nobel acceptance speech as "a movement to restore the beauty and wonder of the natural world."

The Adirondack Park is a similar case, especially when considering all the places in the world that have been lost to rampant, uncontrolled development. This is because over a hundred years ago, a few visionary leaders had a dream about a vast wilderness being set aside from the ravages of an overbearing civilization. They also knew that this new Park would require constant vigilance.

Thirty years ago, several national environmental organizations considered the Adirondack Park so large and unique that it needed a group to focus specifically on protecting the largest remaining wilderness east of the Mississippi River, and the Adirondack Council was born. Since that time, the Council has taken on many battles: to end acid rain, restrict excessive development, and identify key land acquisitions and funds to consolidate wilderness areas, to name a few. During our 30th Anniversary in 2005, we will celebrate these many successes with the people and organizations that helped us to achieve them. More importantly, we will also look to the future.

Try to envision what will happen over the next thirty years as the Council builds on our past successes and works with others to ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park. An end to acid rain and the return of healthy spruce forests in the High Peaks, and brook trout and other fish to our lakes and streams. A Park with viable populations of all the species once found here because they have sufficient wilderness and natural corridors on private lands. Working forests and farms that are ecologically managed and support local economies. Clean streams and lakes that provide pure drinking water and are free of invasive species. Villages and hamlets that are once again economically vibrant and attractive for residents and visitors alike.

Clearly, we have lofty goals to accomplish over the next thirty years if we are to achieve such a dream. We appreciate everyone who has been with us over the past thirty years and welcome newcomers to this incredibly important effort. Thank you and let's keep forever wild!



Brian L. Houseal
Executive Director

Cover: Lyon Mountain's summit would become Forest Preserve under an agreement announced in January by former owner Domtar Industries, Gov. George Pataki, the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and its conservation partner Lyme Timber Co. of New Hampshire. This is the view to the northeast, looking toward Chazy Lake. Photo courtesy of the Adirondack Nature Conservancy.

Newsletter Photos by Adirondack Council Staff unless otherwise noted.

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Our Mission

The mission of the Adirondack Council is to ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park. Founded in 1975, the Council is a privately funded, not-for-profit organization.

Newsletter design by Sheri Amsel

Massive Domtar Deal to Protect 104,000 Acres

Twelve years of persistence paid off for the northern Adirondacks in January when Gov. George Pataki announced that the state would acquire nearly 20,000 acres of new public lands and would sign a conservation agreement to protect an additional 84,000 acres of productive timberland from development. The lands include the entire Adirondack holdings of Domtar Industries of Cornwall, Ontario all of which are located in northern Franklin and Clinton counties.

Domtar first began working in concert with the Adirondack Council in 1992, urging the Legislature to create a state fund for the purchase of development rights from the owners of large commercial forests in the Adirondacks. While the state later created an Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and added to it a "working forest" category, the complexity of the deal sought by Domtar and concerns expressed by local officials about issuing financial subsidies to a Canadian company, delayed final action to acquire development rights from Domtar.

Meanwhile, Domtar became the first timber company in the Adirondacks to obtain independent (third-party) certification of its sustainable harvesting operation, and did the same at its lumber and paper mills in Canada. Eventually, however, Domtar sought to divest itself entirely of its Adirondack holdings.

The Adirondack Nature Conservancy stepped in more than two years ago to provide a source of money to complete a three-way transfer of rights and property that allows the state to commit itself to the agreement now and finalize the deal when the money becomes available from this year's EPF appropriation. The proj-

ect is expected to cost \$23.7 million.

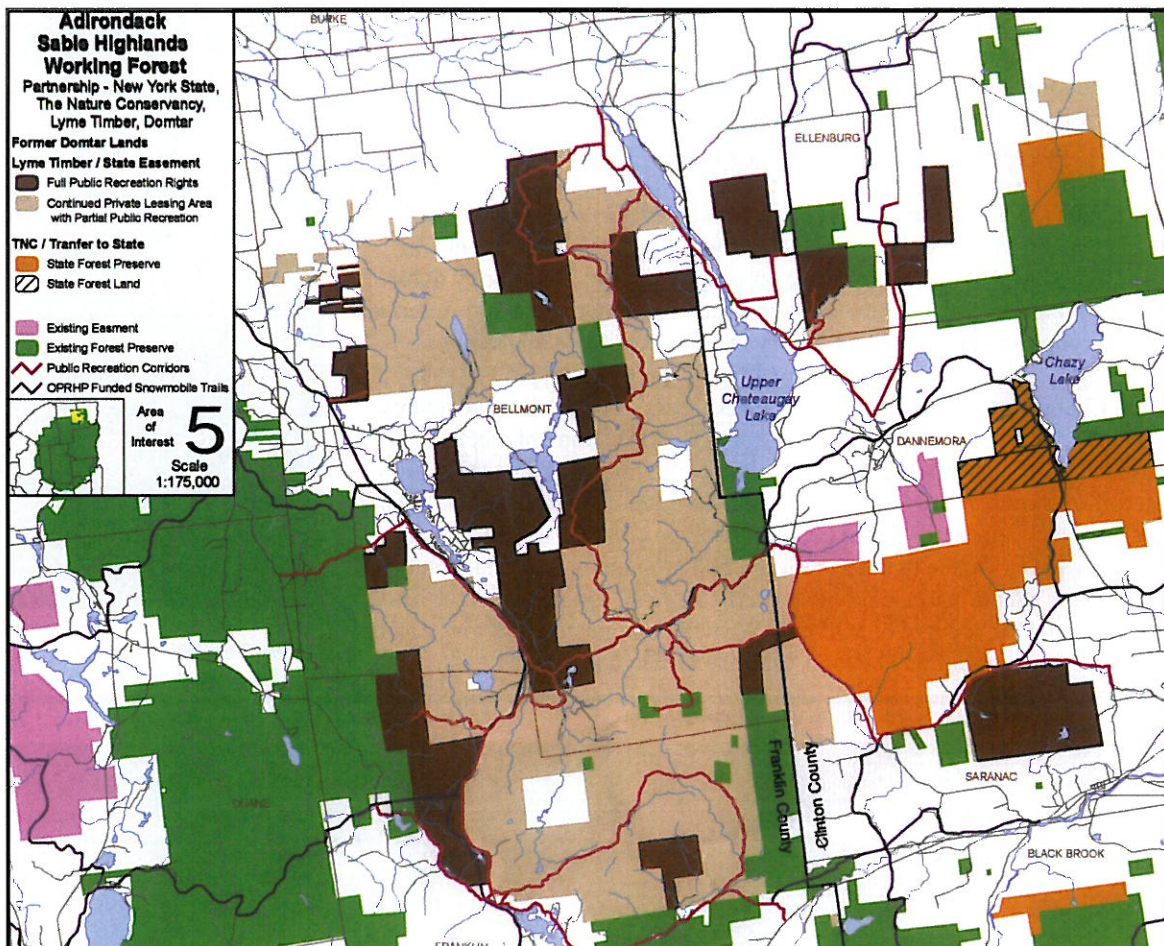
When the deal is complete, the state will own 19,960 acres of new Adirondack Forest Preserve. Lyme Timber Company of Hanover, NH, will own the deed to the remaining 84,000 acres, but the state will own and extinguish all of the development rights. The current zoning for the lands would have allowed more than 2,000 principal residences, with accessory buildings and new roads.

The deal permanently prevents the fragmentation of a solid block of forest that makes up most of the available open space in the Park's northeast corner. The agreement provides the first public access to these lands for hiking, camping, hunting, fishing and other traditional recreational uses and will allow the expansion of snowmobiling and other motorized public access, relieving pressure from the more sensitive Forest Preserve.

The centerpiece of the Forest Preserve purchase is Lyon Mountain, which is the tallest peak in this part of the Park. It also includes undeveloped shoreline on Chazy Lake, and new access to Forest Preserve lands.

Lyme Timber will manage the remaining property as a "working forest," maintaining the property's current Forest Stewardship Council's (FSC) certification. FSC is considered the highest standard for sustainable forestry management.

The Adirondack Council will work with the Nature Conservancy and the state to determine the best uses for the new Forest Preserve and easement lands to urge state officials to classify them accordingly.



Congress Funds Tahawus Project

Congress took one of its few positive environmental steps of 2004 here in the Adirondack Park, providing funding for the protection of the Tahawus Tract just as the year was drawing to a close.

The Adirondack Council sought Congressional funding for the Tahawus project as part of the New York Caucus of the Northern Forest Alliance, ensuring that Tahawus was the top priority for federal attention in 2004. US Reps. John McHugh, R-Pierrepont Manor, and John Sweeney, R-Clifton Park, as well as US Sens. Charles Schumer and Hillary Clinton, and President George Bush, worked in concert to add the Tahawus grant to the 2004-05 federal budget.

The House and Senate each passed budget bills appropriating \$1.7 million toward the purchase and protection of nearly 10,000 acres of forest and waters in the southern High Peaks region of the Park, in the Town of Newcomb. A New York-based land conservation organization, the Open Space Institute, agreed in 2003 to work with the state in purchasing the land from NL Industries,

adding the northern two-thirds to the Forest Preserve, while also establishing a conservation contract with a private timber company to sustainably manage the southern portion.

The Adirondack Council will urge the state to add the northern portion to the High Peaks Wilderness Area once the transactions are complete. An Adirondack Park Agency permit will be needed to allow the subdivision of the NL Industries parcel. The lands contain the headwaters to the Hudson River as well as a trailhead leading to the state's tallest mountains, plus a fire tower that is expected to remain open, but on private land. This partnership also opened up other recreational waters that had been closed to the public for more than 100 years.

OSI won the Council's 2004 Conservationist of the Year Award for its preservation work on the Tahawus parcel, the Heurich Estate (which has become the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest) and for protecting vital bird habitat on the shore of Lake Champlain in Ticonderoga.

30 YEARS
1975 - 2005

Acid Rain: Demanding a Solution to the Park's Biggest Threat

When the Adirondack Council first raised the alarm about acid rain's devastating impact on Adirondack lakes, forests and wildlife, many doubted the connection between power plant emissions in the Midwest and highly acidic lakes void of aquatic life in the Adirondacks. Persistence, documentation and public education have made a real difference in the national scientific and political debates.

Over the years, the Council has produced two full-color publications illustrating the devastation acid rain has wrought in the Adirondack Park and across the nation. In 1995, the Council teamed up with a national textbook and science lab supply company to produce free acid rain classroom posters that were distributed to hundreds of classrooms in New York and Vermont.

The Council enlisted the help of renowned Adirondack Park-loving entertainers Bonnie Raitt and Natalie Merchant for a series of public service announcements. In 2001, the Council produced a 10-minute movie on acid rain, hosted by Morley Safer (60 Minutes), which premiered on public television stations in more than 100 American cities. We sent free copies to every lending library in New York State and dozens of school districts.

Adirondack Council staff members have accepted countless invitations to address large groups about acid rain at colleges, civic organizations, government meetings, scientific conferences, legal symposiums, garden club gatherings, and on public radio and television call-in shows. Today, acid rain is a standard topic in grade school science classes and college environmental science courses. Average citizens, scientists, policy makers and industry leaders agree that acid rain is a real problem with a clear solution. The Council first drew attention to the problem nearly 30 years ago and we have made significant strides to end the scourge of acid rain. We will continue to work towards this goal during our 30th Anniversary and beyond, until the problem is solved.



Damage to red spruce and balsam fir on Gothic mountain.

The Adirondack Council is to be commended on its thirty years of helping to protect the Adirondack Park and its Forest Preserve through turbulent years of anti-environmental attacks. Having served on the Board of the Council for about two decades starting in 1975 when Harold Jerry was chairman, the Council held to its belief that the Adirondack Park, because of its terrain, climate, and location deserved consideration different from areas outside of the Park. The Forest Preserve under Article XIV of the State Constitution is the magnet that attracts visitors who enhance the economy of the area.

Clarence Petty, Coreys

Pataki & Spitzer Team Up To Curb In-State Acid Rain

In a joint press conference at the State Capitol in January, Gov. George Pataki and Attorney General Eliot Spitzer announced they had each reached legal settlements that require deep pollution cuts and fines from the state's largest sources of acid rain.

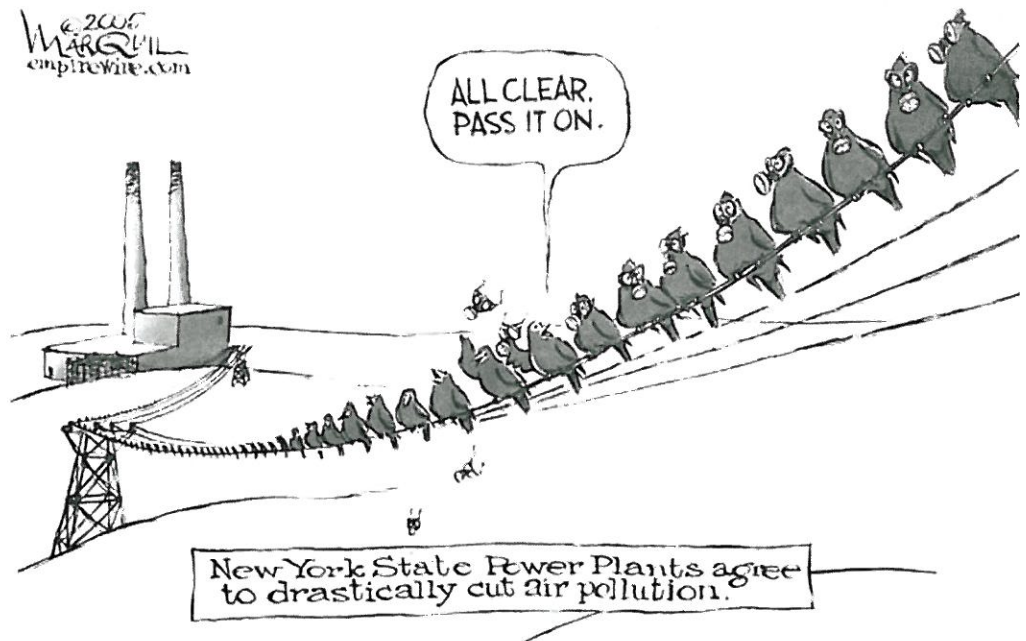
The Governor announced that the Department of Environmental Conservation has reached a settlement with four Southern Tier power plants over violations of state air pollution laws. The Attorney General announced the settlement of federal lawsuits he brought against Western New York power plants over violations of the federal Clean Air Act.

Those plants are the largest sources of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions, the chemicals that cause acid rain, asthma and other respiratory ailments, especially in children. Under the settlement, 18,000 tons of nitrogen oxide and 123,000 tons of sulfur dioxide will be removed annually from the emissions of the six plants. The two chief polluters, the Huntley (near Buffalo) and Dunkirk (near Jamestown) power plants combined will reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by 87 percent and nitrogen oxide emissions by 81 percent.

NRG Energy Inc., the owner of Huntley and Dunkirk, said it will install new pollution controls, use cleaner-burning coal and retire the four oldest generators at the plants. NRG and other plaintiffs also agreed to drop their legal challenges to the state's new acid rain control regulations. Those regulations require all power plants to reduce their sulfur dioxide emissions by 50 percent and their nitrogen oxides by 70 percent over eight years.

Under the agreement, the previous owners of Huntley and Dunkirk, the Niagara Mohawk Power Corp., agreed to a \$3 million penalty and to pay an additional \$3 million for environment-benefit projects in western New York, such as adding pollution control devices to school buses.

The other four plants involved in the settlement are owned by AES in the Finger Lakes and on the Southern Tier: Greenidge in Torrey, Hickling in Corning, Westover in Johnson City and Jennison in Bainbridge. AES said it would install new "clean coal" technology at Greenidge and either close the other three facilities or install new pollution controls in them as well. The former owner of the four AES plants, the New York State Electric and Gas Corp., will pay a \$700,000 fine, state officials said.



Interstate Air Rule Postponed

In December, the US Environmental Protection Agency announced it would postpone for three months the release and finalization of new emissions regulations for electric power plants known as the Clean Air Interstate Rule.

The news came just as EPA Administrator Michael Leavitt resigned to take a cabinet-level assignment as the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Leavitt had promised to finalize and impose the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) by the end of December in a speech in August at the second annual Adirondack Water Quality Conference hosted by Paul Smith's College.

The delay has no meaningful effect on the Rule or the effort to stop acid rain's damage in the Adirondack Park. The 70 percent cuts in sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides (the two main

components of acid rain) ordered by the CAIR would be carried out in two phases over a 10-year period, with the first cut to go into effect in 2010.

The Bush Administration also announced in December that it would press Congress to pass legislation, containing cuts similar to the Clean Air Interstate Rule, but on a 13-year schedule.

The Adirondack Council will urge the Bush Administration to finalize the Clean Air Interstate Rule by March 15, regardless of what happens in Congress. The Council will press Congressional leaders to consider only legislation that would improve upon the Clean Air Interstate Rule, and allow states such as New York to use other options to force emissions reductions to clean up the air in the Adirondacks.

Summary of Adirondack Council Efforts on Acid Rain ~ 1975 to Present

Mid to late 1970's: Working with researchers from southern Quebec and Ontario, the Adirondack Council creates a coalition of citizens and organizations interested in studying and controlling the newly documented phenomenon known as "acid rain." High elevation spruce forests are in decline and fish populations are disappearing from high elevation lakes and streams.

1987: The Council publishes "Beside the Stilled Waters," a 32-page full-color primer on the damage acid rain has done in the Adirondacks and in Europe, the first such publication in the United States that becomes a valuable lobbying tool in Congress.

1990 to 1992: The Adirondack Council is appointed as the only environmental organization to hold a seat on President Bush's 44-member Acid Rain Advisory Committee, which drafts new regulations for the acid rain reduction program required by the Clean Air Act amendments. Nearly all of the other 43 members are representatives of power companies.

1993: The Council joins forces with the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to sue the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), declaring that the Agency had issued too many pollution allowances and was inadequately monitoring emissions.

1994: In response to the lawsuit, EPA revises the regulations by removing 800,000 tons worth of sulfur dioxide allowances from the acid rain program each year for five years, and by requiring companies to install round-the-clock emissions monitoring on every power plant smokestack in the nation.

1995: Under legal pressure from the Council and NRDC, EPA issues the long-overdue report on acid rain. The report states that 43 percent of the Adirondack Park's lakes and ponds will be dead by 2040 without additional controls on sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides, from electric power plants.

1997: The Adirondack Council introduces the Clean Air Certificate, presented to those who have made a donation to the Council to retire a ton's worth of sulfur dioxide pollution allowances. Two separate donations (1997 and 1998) of allowances to the Council by the Niagara Mohawk Power Corp make the program possible.

1998: Adirondack Council releases "Acid Rain: A Continuing National Tragedy," a 32-page color update on the damage acid rain is doing around the United States. Celebrity hosted public service announcements and national advertising in collaboration with other environmental and historic preservation groups continue to elevate awareness of acid rain to the national level.

1999: The Council testifies twice on behalf of the "Acid Deposition and Ozone Control Act" before a panel of U.S. Senators from the Committee on Environment and Public Works. Senator D'Amato also testifies in favor of the bill.

A Washington, D.C. press conference with groups interested in preventing acid rain damage to historic buildings and monuments and a D.C. subway ad campaign draw attention to the need for legislative action to stop acid rain, urging Congress to pass the Moynihan-Boehlert Acid Rain Bill.

2000: With the assistance of the Rivendell Foundation, the Council produces a public television newsbreak special on acid rain's impact on the East Coast featuring veteran CBS newscaster Morley Safer (60 Minutes).

2001: On the first day of bill introductions for the new Congress, U.S. Rep. Sweeney introduces the "Acid Rain and Smog Act" in the House, with co-sponsors John McHugh and Sherwood Boehlert. Council staff participates in press conferences held by the sponsors to discuss the acid rain bill. The Adirondack Council, along with the Center for Environmental Information, co-sponsor the first national conference on acid rain in a decade, and the Council takes out a full-page ad in *Roll Call*, a Washington legislative paper, urging Congress to take action to end acid rain. Council staff members are invited to be part of a stakeholder meeting convened by Sen. Jeffords to discuss clean air legislation. The Council's acid rain video is distributed to all committee members and participants.

2002: EPA Administrator Christie Todd Whitman joins the Adirondack Council in Albany for a press conference to discuss clean air legislation. President Bush spends Earth Day in the Adirondacks and discusses the need for further clean air legislation and a solution to acid rain.

2003: Adirondack Council testifies before the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee to call for reduced emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, the causes of acid rain. The Council unveils an advertising campaign urging Congress "Don't Come Home Empty-Handed," solve the Adirondack's acid rain problem.

2003: EPA announces that it will take regulatory action to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides by 70% throughout the east.

2004: The Adirondack Council works with Trout Unlimited and National Trust for Historic Preservation to produce informational materials about the need for emissions reductions and submits comments to the EPA on the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR). Council staff testifies at EPA hearings in Chicago, IL; Philadelphia, PA and Raleigh, NC. The Council participates in a press conference with Cong. Sweeney and the NYS Conservation Council urging the public to submit comments on the rule. Council staff testifies in Alexandria, VA on the supplemental rule of CAIR. Michael Leavitt, EPA Administrator, comes to the Adirondacks and pledges implementation of the new rule.

2005: Adirondack Council invited to testify before the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Foreign Students Visit Council

Participants in the master's degree program *Future Generations* visited the Adirondack Council in Elizabethtown during October as part of their mobile seminar. Under the direction of George Taylor, students from Zambia, India, Afghanistan, First Nations – Canada, Nepal, Tibet, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, and the United States are part of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) funded effort to research, demonstrate, and teach how communities change. The course focus is on building democracy and the role of non-governmental organizations in sustainable development and environmental advocacy. Brian Houseal, Executive Director of the Adirondack Council, conducted a seminar on the structure of the Park and the Adirondack Council's role in advocating for the sound public policies to benefit the Adirondack Park.



New Activist Manual Available

To celebrate 30 years of advocacy, The Adirondack Council has developed an activist manual for our members to enhance their activist skills. The document, entitled, *Defending the East's Last Great Wilderness - A Guide for Adirondack Park Activists*, includes information on writing letters to policymakers, meeting with elected officials, and other advocacy tools and also contains a section with Park facts and history for easy reference.

If you would like a copy, please call us at: 877-873-2240 or e-mail us at Activists@adirondackcouncil.org

Students Care About Acid Rain

Adirondack Council Legislative Associate and Penfield native Jessica Ottney made a special presentation to the students at the Allendale Columbia School in Rochester in early December. The kids raised \$150 for a special project and dedicated the money to purchasing and retiring air pollution allowances. Jessica presented the students with three Clean Air Certificates indicating they have retired three tons worth of sulfur dioxide pollution, protecting the Adirondacks from the acid rain that would have fallen if a power company had bought and used the allowances instead. Teacher Susan Ginn oversaw the student's efforts.



On behalf of Audubon New York as well as the National Audubon Society, I want to congratulate you and your board on the 30th Anniversary of the Adirondack Council. Audubon is proud to be able to say that we were there when the Council was first formed and we are equally proud to say we are a participating member today.

The Adirondack battles and victories over the past three decades have been numerous from the fledging years of the Adirondack Park Agency to the controversies surrounding the Adirondack Commission, to the recent acquisition and protection of hundreds and thousands of acres of Adirondack Park land. Audubon sees the Adirondack Council as a constant, critical voice throughout these events as well as a conservation leader to take us into the 21st Century of Adirondack programs.

Again, thank you Adirondack Council, for all that you have done and continue to do for the Adirondack Park.

David J. Miller, Executive Director, Audubon New York

Frankenpine Shrinks from Torch of Public Scrutiny

Media attention, public pressure and a strong legal case orchestrated by the Adirondack Council and other opponents have already compelled NEXTEL to change the design of the first “Frankenpine” cell tower proposed to the Adirondack Park Agency.

Formal public hearings had been scheduled for December on a proposed steel and plastic cell tower disguised as a white pine tree on the scenic, undeveloped eastern shore of Lake George. The hearings were postponed by a flurry of last-minute changes in the project by the applicant, NEXTEL, a telecommunications giant based in Virginia. Changes included a 10-foot reduction in the proposed tower height, from 114 feet to 104 feet tall. But even at the new height, the tower would extend substantially above the surrounding mature conifer and deciduous trees.

The fake pine tree proposal was dubbed Frankenpine by the Adirondack Council in local newspaper ads and in our press releases. The ads called on area residents and summer visitors to write to the Adirondack Park Agency. The hearings were due to resume in late January, 2005.

Meanwhile, the Council worked with the Fort Ann Town Board and grassroots groups such as PROTECT, the Lake George Waterkeeper, and the Residents’ Committee to Protect the Adirondacks, to recruit expert witnesses and vocal opponents for the hearings. The coalition wants a thorough review of the visual impact on the host community of Pilot Knob, the Town of Fort Ann and other areas from which the tower would be visible. The groups have also called for a review of the storm water runoff, and forest clearcutting

plans, as well as alternatives to the current site.

For the hearings, which were scheduled to be underway as this newsletter went to press, the Council has enlisted the help of several experts. They include visual assessment consultant Richard Smarden (author of *The Legal Landscape*); renowned Adirondack landscape photographer Carl Heilman II; other art experts for whom Lake George’s eastern shore is an iconic landscape painted dozens of times in the 19th and early 20th centuries by the masters of the Hudson River School of Art; and, the conservation law firm of Melewski & Greenwood to represent the Council. Following the adjudicatory hearings the APA will vote on this project.



30 YEARS
1975 - 2005

Thank you!

Adirondack Council members come from all walks of life. Council members hail from all 50 United States and four continents. Council members are nearly equally divided into those who consider themselves liberals, those who say they are conservative and those who say they are neither.

But there are two things that all Adirondack Council members have in common: an abiding love for the Adirondack Park and a strong desire to protect it from degradation. In short, our members’ commitment to environmental protection and their depth of knowledge about the Park are second to none.

With initial support from national organizations like the Wilderness Society, Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Adirondack Council grew a small regional membership to a membership of 3,000 by our 5th anniversary. By the mid-1990s, membership had grown to 15,000. As we celebrate our 30th Anniversary there are 18,000 Adirondack Council members from all 50 states. Many members are year-round or seasonal residents of the Park. Some are enthusiastic regular visitors. Still others never come to the Park, but have a

strong desire to protect its wildlife habitat, scenic beauty and rural communities.

Time and again, Council members have carried the organization’s hopes and dreams to fruition. When staff members have struggled to persuade public officials to protect the Park’s wild character and ecological health, and struggled to persuade the press to pay attention, our members have come to the rescue. By writing letters and making phone calls to local, state and federal officials, Council members have stopped harmful legislation, forced changes in unwise state policies and reassured timid allies in times of crisis. We could not ask for anything more.

For 30 years of attentive interest in the issues, active participation in the political process, and generous financial support, all we can do is say, from the bottom of our hearts, “Thank you for being the greatest members an environmental conservation organization ever had!”

We hope you stay with us for another 30 years.

Red Balloon May Really be White Flag for CP Rail

In December, Canadian Pacific Rail Road began raising test balloons for a series of short communications towers designed to replace the 150-foot-tall towers that caused a public outcry when CP Rail began building them without public notice (or a permit) last summer.

Adirondack Park Agency officials said the balloons were the beginning of a visual assessment to determine how tall replacement towers will be along CP Rail's line. The 150-foot-tall towers in Essex and Port Kent will come down. It is still unclear what CP Rail will propose as an alternative. The assessment was expected to continue through February.

The test balloons were the first visual proof that the Adirondack Council and the APA had succeeded in persuading the company to stop building the huge towers in the Park, to remove them and to replace them with shorter, less visible structures.

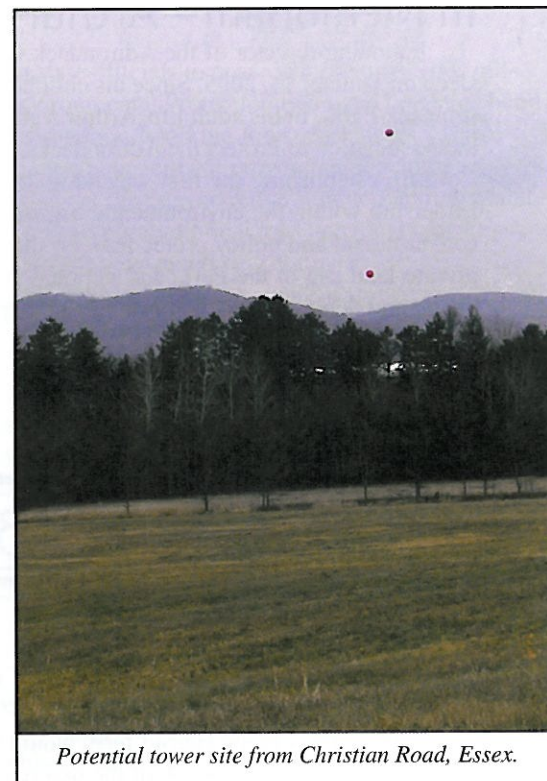
CP Rail owns the former Delaware & Hudson rail line, which enters the Park in Dresden, Washington County, and runs for more than 100 miles just inside the eastern border. The line exits the Park in Ausable, Clinton County, en route to Montreal.

CP Rail had been scheduled to appear in federal court in August to argue that it had a right to build whatever it needed along its tracks, regardless of local land-use restrictions. The Adirondack Park Agency issued a cease-and-desist order to CP Rail in July, after the company erected two 150-foot-tall towers in Essex and Port Kent. CP Rail, which had not even applied for a Park Agency permit, sued the agency in US District Court in Albany in an attempt to overturn the cease-and-desist order.

The Adirondack Council petitioned the federal court for the right to join the court case on the side of the Park Agency. The Council believed that the Park Agency's authority over any structure 40 feet or taller applied to federally regulated railroads.

At the same time, the Adirondack Council ventured into the court of public opinion. Through a Freedom of Information Act request, the Council informed the public that the towers were constructed with money provided by a state grant. Just as the Council's federal court motion was about to be heard, CP Rail dropped its suit.

The Adirondack Council is not opposed to improved communications on the Park's main freight and Amtrak passenger line. Given the ample technology choices available, the Council wanted to ensure that the equipment chosen wouldn't harm the Park's natural, open-space character. Additional 150-foot-tall towers had been planned for Dresden and Crown Point.



Potential tower site from Christian Road, Essex.

Council Calls for APA Hearing on Proposed Sacandaga Towers

The Adirondack Council in December called on the Adirondack Park Agency to hold an adjudicatory public hearing on Saratoga County's proposal to build three mountaintop emergency radio towers around the Great Sacandaga Lake.

While the Council understands and supports the desire to improve emergency communications in the Sacandaga Valley, there are several potential environmental problems with the system the county insists on proposing. The county wants to use line-of-sight microwave signal technology that requires very tall towers that are visible above the tree tops.

The Council has several concerns with the county's proposal:

- Clearing pristine mountaintops for towers requires the destruction of wildlife habitat. All 3 sites require new roads. Two would run through protected wetlands. The third would become a new access road for a not-yet-built housing development at an elevation of 1,000 feet or more, worsening an already unacceptable visual intrusion on the valley's ridgelines. Building roads up mountain slopes to denuded

summits increases storm water runoff that will affect the lake and the streams that feed it.

- Two of the three sites are being seized from their landowners by the county against the landowners' wishes.
- The towers would be the first ridge-top development on the Great Sacandaga Lake.

A report requested by Saratoga County from the NYS Office for Technology said the proposed Statewide Wireless Network would cover the entire valley without a single new tower, within five years, for free. The county refused the state's offer to finance the new radio system. The county also refused to consider other technologies. Instead, it wants to spend an additional \$14 million on towers that will be either obsolete or redundant before the end of the decade.

The Council advised the APA that an adjudicatory public hearing was the best way to fix shortcomings in the proposals and find a reasonable compromise.

In Memoriam—Arthur M. Crocker, Founding Director

Founding director of the Adirondack Council and long-time board member Arthur Crocker died peacefully in his sleep on January 11, 2005. Since his childhood, Arthur spent time each summer in Newcomb, NY in the heart of the Adirondack Park. In his adult life, Arthur's advocacy for the Adirondack Park was unwavering. In his role as President of the Association to Protect the Adirondacks, Arthur worked with several national organizations to launch the Adirondack Council, establishing the first watchdog and advocacy organization for the Adirondack Park within its boundary. His leadership within the environmental organizations he served and individually as a determined activist led to increased constitutional and policy protections for the public Forest Preserve, creation of the Adirondack Park Agency to oversee private land use in the Park, and national policies to end acid rain's damage to the Park. We are grateful for Arthur's vision and achievements that provide an inspiring model for the next generation of Adirondack conservation and environmental activists.

30 YEARS
1975 - 2005

Gary Randorf Recalls the Early Days

In late July of 1977, I ran into G. Gordon Davis, then chief counsel of the APA (I was park naturalist for APA then) at the Keene post office. He told me Harold Jerry would be calling me that morning to offer me the job of the first paid executive director of the 2-year old Adirondack Council. Courtney Jones had shouldered the job gratis, for two years, serving as chairman as well. Courtney had done a heck of a good job, quickly establishing the Council as a new private Adirondack environmental force to be reckoned with. In these initial two years the Council had primarily confined its mission to supporting the APA as a "friend of the court" as several challenges of the APA law ensued on the grounds that the state was "taking" land without compensation and usurping local government jurisdiction.

In August of '77, I settled into a little nook next to the library in the Hand family historic house in Elizabethtown. The budget was \$40,000, and the staff consisted of me and Carolyn Conklin, as part-time secretary and membership coordinator. That staffing level remained for five years until the workload grew in leaps and bounds. George Davis came on board as Program Director. Thereafter, over a few short years, the membership and staffing grew considerably to the point where today the Council staff numbers 14 and the annual budget is nearly \$1.3 million.

The Council has and continues to have many accomplishments—it led the 13-year effort to achieve conservation easement legislation; it led the way to see the chemical control of blackflies to be phased out; the Council contributed mightily to the establishment of the Visitor Interpretive Centers at Paul Smiths and Newcomb; and, has consistently been a loud voice for key Forest Preserve expansions, including publishing the first map identifying high priority private lands to be emphasized for acquisition from willing sellers—and insuring the availability of state acquisition funds.

The outstanding efforts and achievements of the Council (and let's remember the Council is in reality its thousands of

committed members and its many grantees—both individuals and foundations—who recognize that dues and grants are a most sound "investment") have led to the Council to be considered one of the top regional environmental NGO's [non-governmental organizations] in America.

Congratulations too, 30-year-old Adirondack Council, to your legion of great members and benefactors. Together, your continuing determination, patience, stick-to-it-tiveness, and financial support have accomplished many stellar feats on behalf of the greatest park on Earth.

The honor and privilege of being part of the Adirondack Council staff for 25 years has been the most rewarding endeavor of my life. From where I sit, there couldn't be a better organization to be part of.

Harold Jerry guaranteed my employment for two years; beyond that, he said, "we will see." Harold would love to witness this 30-year celebration, and perhaps he will from the great wilderness in the heavens. His vision, and that of Courtney Jones, Bill Hord, Dick Lawrence, Arthur Crocker, Frances Beinecke, and others who equally deserve mention, is alive, expanded, and extremely well.

The Adirondack Council is needed more than ever as the earth's wildness is further tamed.



*Former Adirondack
Council Executive
Director Gary Randorf
Naval, Biliran, Republic
of the Philippines
Boxing Day, 2004*

Working Forests

Of the 3.3 million acres of private land in the Adirondack Park, the top 10 timber companies own more than 30 percent. Realizing that these companies' lands adjoin the Forest Preserve throughout the Park, the Adirondack Council is determined to protect the Park's commercial forests from fragmentation and development.

For more than a decade, the Council led the effort to pass legislation allowing the state to negotiate conservation agreements with private landowners in which the state would buy and extinguish any development rights in exchange for a promise to pay a portion of the property taxes. On large timber holdings, tax relief can mean the difference between a sustainable harvesting operation and one where the owners are forced to subdivide and liquidate, or to harvest faster than the forest can regenerate.

Between 1986 and 2005 the Adirondack Council succeed-

ed in persuading state officials to provide more than \$100 million from the Environmental Protection Fund and two state bond acts to obtain Adirondack "working forest easements." Aside from the environmental benefits of preventing development, easements also prevent the conversion of productive timberland into other uses, preserving traditional jobs and local industries for the Park's 130,000 year-round residents.

Protecting forest lands with conservation agreements is vital to the Park's overall biological diversity. Sustainable harvesting provides habitat for wildlife that thrives on forest fringes, large open areas and transition areas between the never-cut Forest Preserve and human communities (i.e., whitetail deer, foxes, coyotes, ravens). Together with wild forests and large blocks of roadless wilderness, (preferred by black bears, spruce grouse, fishers, common loons, etc.), these lands help to ensure the Park's stature as one of the world's greatest natural sanctuaries.

Constitutional Crisis Looming

The New York State Legislature failed to act in concert on a Constitutional Amendment to allow the residents of the hamlet of Raquette Lake to have clean drinking water that is obtained without violating the Constitution. This inaction sets a bad precedent for future uses of Forest Preserve lands.

The Senate unanimously passed the original version in June of last year which addressed the issue more generally and would have allowed wells to be placed on a small portion of the Forest Preserve, in lieu of surface reservoirs, which are currently permitted under an existing 1913 Constitutional Amendment but are no longer a viable alternative for many communities due to the cost of filtration technology. The Assembly did not take up the measure in June. Instead, the Assembly passed a different version when it met in August that would allow for a "land swap" to take place between the Town of Long Lake and the State of New York. In exchange for one acre being taken out of the Forest Preserve for the wells, additional acreage of equal or greater value

would be conveyed to the state for incorporation into the Forest Preserve.

The Assembly version was not agreeable to the Senate. The Adirondack Council worked with all parties involved, and the two houses seemed intent on resolving the issue in the fall. Both houses returned to do business in Albany several times while a compromise was being finalized. Finally, both houses seemed poised to act on a proposal in December that was similar to the previous language passed by the Assembly using the idea of a land swap.

However, due to a perceived procedural problem, both the Senate and Assembly decided not to act until the new Legislature began its work in January. The Council is continuing to work with both houses to assure first passage of the amendment at the beginning of session this year. Unfortunately, this delay will add two years to the process before the deal can be completed.

The Adirondack Council thanks our 2004-2005 Forever Wild Partners, working with the Council to promote appreciation and protection of the Adirondack Park.

Adirondack Camp, Lake George www.adirondackcamp.com
 Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts, Blue Mountain Lake www.adk-arts.org
 Adirondack Theatre Festival, Glens Falls www.atfestival.org
 The Bark Eater Inn, Keene www.barkeater.com
 Brant Lake Camp, Brant Lake www.brantlake.com
 Camp Treetops, Lake Placid www.camp-treetops.com
 Depot Theatre, Westport www.depottheatre.org
 Elk Lake Lodge, Elk Lake www.elklakelodge.com
 Lake Placid Center for the Arts, Lake Placid www.lpartscenter.org
 The Lodge at Lake Clear, Lake Clear www.lodgeonlakeclear.com
 Minnowbrook Conference Center, Blue Mountain Lake www.minnowbrook.org
 Pendragon Theatre, Saranac Lake www.pendragontheatre.com
 The Wawbeek Resort, Upper Saranac Lake www.wawbeek.com



30 YEARS
1975 - 2005

Launching Our 30th Year

On January 12th the Adirondack Council Board of Trustees, staff, and supporters gathered at the home of John and Margot Ernst to celebrate the start of the Council's 30th Anniversary year. Special Guest Bill Flynn, Chairman of the New York State Public Service Commission, spoke to guests about the challenges and opportunities regarding the state's renewable energy portfolio and greenhouse gas initiative. The Adirondack Council serves as a member of the state's advisory committee for both. During our thirtieth year, the Council will joyfully celebrate our achievements, and advocate for sound public policy to protect the Park's ecological integrity and wild character.



Current Chair Tricia Winterer with former Board Chairs John Ernst, David Skovron and Kim Elliman.



Clarence Petty, an Adirondack Council member for thirty years and former Board member; Council Director of Communications, John Sheehan, and member Frank Hooper, exchange greetings before the 2004 Annual Membership Meeting at Fort Ticonderoga.



Members of the Board and their spouses gather at the Annual Forever Wild Awards Dinner: (L to R) Carol Kafin, Bob Hall, Joanne Dwyer, David Bronston, Patricia Brown, Carolyn Fowler, Ed Fowler, and Bob Kafin.

Brian Houseal (left) presents Bill Flynn with a Gary Randorf photograph of the High Peaks.

Celebrate with us in Lake Placid

Every summer, we like to meet the spirited people of the Adirondack Council – our members, friends and supporters. Our Annual Membership Meeting and 30th Anniversary Awards Dinner will take place at the Lake Placid Resort on Saturday, July 9, 2005.

Please join us to celebrate our 30th Anniversary year. The energy and commitment of Council members has helped make the Park a more beautiful and wild place. We welcome the opportunity to share with you the recognition of the Council's achievements, and spirited conversation about the ways the Council can protect the Park during the next thirty years.

Members are invited to attend the members' meeting in the afternoon and stay with us into the evening for dinner. You will receive an invitation in the spring with all the details. We hope to see you!

Adirondack Council Field Trips

In spite of the rainy weather during the summer of 2004, members and Adirondack Council staff enjoyed birding and canoeing field trips, delighting in each other's company and relishing the scenic beauty and flora and fauna of the Adirondacks. Serving as poignant reminders of why the Council's efforts to protect the Park are so important, the trips provide a welcomed opportunity for staff members to meet spirited supporters of Adirondack conservation. Look for our field trip listing for 2005 this spring and plan to bring the whole family on a trip that's right for you! We're happy to take suggestions for trips. Hope to see you!



On a quintessential Adirondack day, paddlers lingered among loons, beavers and families of ducks at the foot of the High Peaks with clouds breaking about Henderson Lake.



Marjorie Miller, and Brian and Katherine Houseal on our soggy float down the Moose River near Old Forge. Pouring rain — and lots of fun!



The banks of the Moose River were abundant with Cardinal Flower in mid-August.

A day of birding in the shadow of the Dix Mountains at Elk Lake offered a unique low elevation opportunity to spot boreal chickadees. The wetland areas teemed with cedar wax wings: (L to R: Georgia Guenther, Margot Ernst, Ralph Guenther, Judy Wolosoff, Brian Houseal, Julie Ball, Diane Fish, Bob Wei — leader, Sue Shulman and Bill Shulman.



State Funding Proposed

There were several Adirondack highlights in the budget figures released in January by Gov. George Pataki in presenting his annual budget proposal to the Legislature. Here's a list of some of the Adirondack Council's top priorities:

Environmental Protection Fund: The total amount appropriated for the EPF would increase from \$125 million today to \$150 million. The category within the EPF that may be used for open space protection (new Forest Preserve, conservation easements, etc.) increases from \$32 million last year to \$39 million this year. The state has agreed to protect nearly 400,000 acres of forest in the Adirondacks in the past two years, including 260,000 acres in new conservation easements from International Paper Co.; 20,000 acres of new Forest Preserve and 84,000 acres of easements from Domtar Industries of Canada; and nearly 10,000 acres of easements and Forest Preserve at the Tahawus tract in Newcomb, from NL Industries of Texas. Costs are expected to exceed \$50 million for all three.

Additional money for the fund will come from the Real Estate Transfer Tax, which provides \$112 million currently (a figure that formerly represented about half of the annual revenue collected by the tax). The RETT now brings in more than \$500 million per year.

Community Development Assistance: The Adirondack Council met with Secretary of State Randy Daniels in the Adirondacks last summer to discuss the creation of a new planning assistance program for small Adirondack towns.

Under the plan proposed by the Governor, the Department of State would administer a \$5-million fund to assist small communities with planning efforts they cannot afford on their own. A new category within this fund is set aside for the "mountain communities" of the Adirondacks and Catskills. Both Parks face enormous development pressures and a red-hot real estate market that threatens to harm their natural character and ecological health.

Towns with sparse populations have become vulnerable to sprawling, unattractive roadside development that pushes farther and farther into previously undeveloped areas, using up open space and requiring the town to extend expensive services (plowing, paving, school buses, etc.). Taxes steadily rise to keep pace with new expenses. DOS personnel would be made available to Park communities in a fashion similar to the Tug Hill Commission, which helped the towns of Jefferson and Lewis to counties manage a development boom in the 1980s and 1990s spurred by the expansion of Fort Drum, just west of the Adirondack Park.

All-Terrain Vehicles: The Governor has again proposed a new trail fund, created from registration fees for ATVs. The fee would go from \$10 to \$45 per year. The new fund would contain \$850,000. Funds would be directed to places such as designated trails on conservation easement lands, where riders could enhance recreational opportunities without harming the Forest Preserve. ATVs are banned on the Forest Preserve except on roads designated for special use by the handicapped.

Timberland Tax Abatements: Partial reimbursement of \$1.9 million in lost tax revenues would go to Adirondack and Catskill towns, school districts and counties whose total tax levy is reduced by 1 percent or more by property tax abatements offered by the state to large landowners. The tax abatement help prevent forest fragmentation by taking development pressure off of current landowners.



Adirondack Council Executive Director Brian L. Houseal addresses a press conference at the state capitol in January, in which he explained the Adirondack Park's top environmental needs to journalists from around the state. Friends of New York's Environment, the broad coalition formed to call for an increase in the Environmental Protection Fund, was successful in persuading Gov. George Pataki to propose an increase in the EPF from \$125 million per year to \$150 million.

Major Development Proposed at Big Tupper Ski Area

Last August, a real estate company named Preserve Associates with investors from Philadelphia, PA submitted a conceptual proposal to the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) for the renovation of the Big Tupper Ski Area.

The plan includes development of the lands adjacent to the ski area, currently owned by Oval Wood Dish Corporation (OWD). Preserve Associates hired a local planning firm to prepare the application and additional studies for the APA.

This proposal marks the first time the APA has made use of its new conceptual review procedure. Conceptual review allows applicants to get informal (non-binding) feedback from APA staff and Commissioners and gives the public a chance to provide meaningful feedback before a final application is filed. This provides a chance for the APA and the applicant to iron out issues before the applicant commits a lot of time and money to an undesirable design.

The project would be built on 6,400 acres south of the Village of Tupper Lake and adjacent to Lake Simond and Tupper Lake. The current Big Tupper Ski Area is located on approximately 550 acres. OWD owns more than 5,800 acres, which would be included in the development, along with McDonald's Marina on the shore of Tupper Lake near the entrance to the ski area. The Tupper Lake municipal golf course is also nearby.

Portions of the lands are classified as Resource Management, Low Intensity, Moderate Intensity, and Hamlet. Each of these land classifications allows varying amounts of development, from

42.7 acres between principal buildings to no acreage restriction. Preserve Associates proposed to rehabilitate the existing ski center, and construct or refurbish approximately 420 buildings for a total of 826 units. Construction would be divided into four phases over a fifteen-year period. Those buildings will include:

- 486 townhouse units (Type A),
- 102 single family homes around ski center (Type B),
- 157 single family homes away from ski center (Type C),
- Twenty-five 50-100 acre "great camp" lots with 5 acre building envelopes (Type D),
- The facilities and out buildings at the ski center,
- A 90-room inn,
- A restaurant, and
- A club house/restaurant at the marina (with a 50-60 slip dock).

Except for 25 "great camp" lots, the rest of the development is intended to be tied into municipal sewer, water and electric services, which must be extended to the site from the village.

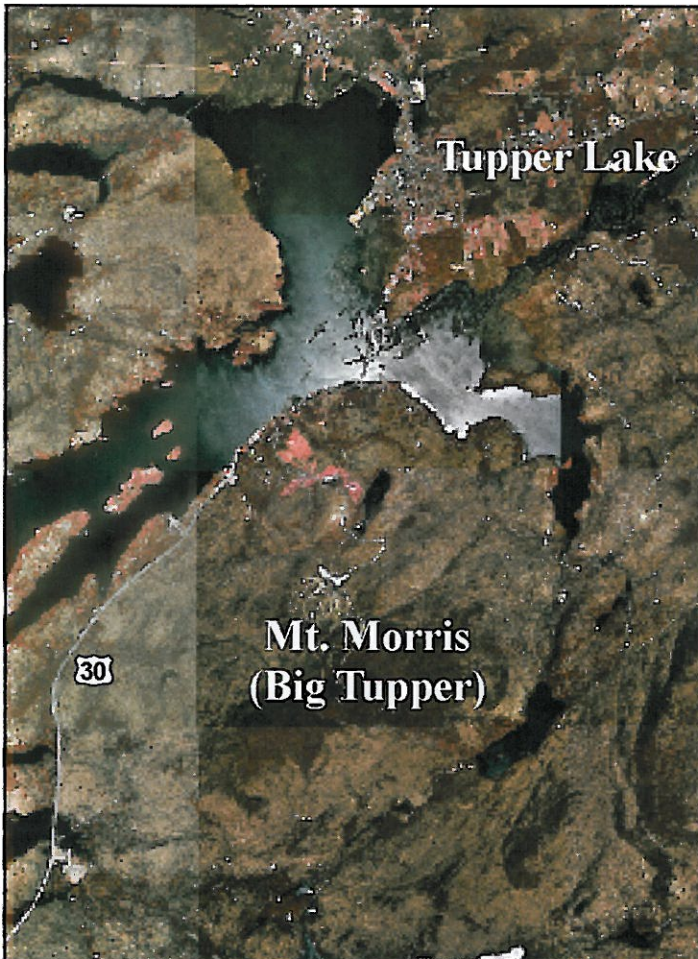
In addition to the permit required from the Adirondack Park Agency, this proposed development will require permits from the Town and Village, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and NYS Department of Transportation.

The Adirondack Council has reviewed the conceptual proposal and although we share Tupper Lake's enthusiasm for the renovation of the ski area, we are concerned about this scale of development and the potential impacts. We have provided comments to the APA and the planners indicating our concerns with the number of proposed buildings/homes, the potential for impacts to the natural resources and wild character of the area and the adequacy of the utilities (sewer, water, and electricity).

The Council has encouraged the APA to work with the project applicant to develop the best possible project for the community of Tupper Lake and the Adirondack Park. There are many programs in place which set standards for environmentally sensitive and energy efficient design, and the APA should require the applicant to meet the highest standards to minimize the potential negative impacts. If at the right scale and done correctly, this proposed development could set the standard for future developments in the Adirondack Park.

The Adirondack Council will continue to monitor this project closely and provide comments to the APA and the planners as appropriate and when the formal permit application is submitted. As always, the Adirondack Council will encourage the APA and the project applicant to protect the ecological integrity and the wild character of the Park.

This image of the Big Tupper ski area is a compilation of multiple orthoimages that were collected from the New York State Statewide Digital Orthoimagery Program (DOP) at the NYS GIS (Geographic Information System) Clearinghouse (<http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/index.html>) and pieced together using a GIS. The DOP is a state program that aims to take aerial photographs of approximately 25% of the state every year.



The Boom and Bust Cycle

For the past 30 years, the Adirondack Council has been the Adirondack Park's voice in Albany and Washington, DC, tracking problems, proposing solutions and bringing about changes in state and federal policy that better protect the Park.

Fragmentation of forests and the loss of wildlife habitat due to subdivision and development is one of the most destructive problems the Park has ever faced. Once they are built, camps and homes are almost never removed. While the sign on the front gate may preserve the name of the forest that once stood there, the forest itself is gone forever.

In hard economic times, Park communities anxious for growth are often tempted to approve questionable projects. But those projects are infrequent, allowing the Park Agency time to focus carefully on the review. During a boom, projects line up for review one after another, with barely enough time for Agency staff to consider the implications of each, let alone their cumulative impact.

With each new boom, the long-term damage to the Park increases. Development sprawls further into previously undisturbed open spaces. Water quality problems emerge as large numbers of new septic systems are added to watersheds. New buildings cause increased runoff pollution and put more pressure on overtaxed and outdated sewage treatment facilities. Taxes rise to pay for the extension of utilities and services farther and farther from villages and hamlets. Local property taxes climb higher each year as real estate values escalate, pricing local residents out of their family homes and too often out of the community entirely.

Towns with adequate zoning plans (as tough as, or tougher than, the APA land-use code) are capable of directing development to areas where it will do the most economic good and the least environmental harm. Local planning assistance is one of the most effective means of protecting small towns from big-money development pressure. Unfortunately only 17 of the 92 Adirondack towns have approved land-use plans better than APA rules.

The Council will continue to press the Legislature and Gov. George Pataki for funds to provide immediate planning help to the Park's most vulnerable towns. Without adequate land-use controls, towns are at the mercy of the boom-and-bust development cycle. Over time, affordable housing steadily disappears. Taxes, especially on waterfront homes, spiral out of control. This only feeds the desire to subdivide lands into smaller, less expensive fragments and further degradation of wildlife habitat.

During the second half of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st, the Park has seen three major upswings in the development cycle. The first came shortly after the construction of the Adirondack Northway (I-87) through the Park's eastern counties, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. New development spread out from the exit ramps in all directions. Lake George evolved from a sleepy village into a popular

motoring destination and then into shoulder-to-shoulder development that stretches northward for nearly 15 miles, from Million Dollar Beach to Silver Bay.

That wave of development led to the creation of the Adirondack Park Agency by Gov. Nelson Rockefeller in 1973, as well as the creation of the Adirondack Council in 1975.

The second wave came with the junk bond and real estate booms of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Atlanta speculator Henry Lassiter bought 100,000 acres of Adirondack forest owned by the Diamond International timber company and began subdividing it into building lots of 50 acres each. Developers from around the world focused on the Park with get-rich-quick schemes involving hundreds of new homes and commercial developments. USF&G Insurance and Guinness Brewing joined forces to propose an enormous new development at the former Lake Placid Club. USF&G's financial portfolio collapsed and it sold all of its real estate before completing its application to the APA. Similar schemes unfolded around the Park.

The boom led Gov. Mario M. Cuomo to create the Commission on the Adirondacks in the 21st Century. The report authored by the Commission contained excellent suggestions for better protecting the environment and improving Park communities. But its 245 unprioritized recommendations provided opponents with endless fodder for attacks. The Governor ignored the report and did not act on its findings. Since then, the Adirondack Council has worked to find consensus for the most urgent of the recommendations and has accomplished more than 40 of them.

In 1992, the Adirondack Council called on the Legislature to create the Environmental Protection Fund, which it did in 1993, to provide \$125 million-per-year for open space protection, for conservation agreements that preserve timberland jobs, and for expensive, mandated environmental actions such as recycling and landfill closures.



The third wave of development is now.

Park Feeling New Surge of Development and Gentrification

The third wave of development is moving through the Park right now. Developers are asking permission for massive new residential subdivisions in mountain towns. Individuals and families are buying up shoreline homes and lots at double and triple the market value of just five years ago. Development also has more subtle but extremely serious impacts on the Park including the effect of new services where they were not previously desired. Cell phone companies, wind power companies, emergency service agencies and others want to build huge towers.

Large residential developments have been announced in Old Forge, Herkimer County; in Jay, Essex County; and in Tupper Lake, Hamilton County. Each proposal includes several hundred homes as the centerpiece of a larger development.

As the most desirable waterfront lands are bought up, development has been creeping higher up the slopes of the Park's watersheds. Lake George, Lake Placid, Schroon Lake and a host of other hamlets and villages are hemmed in by tall mountains. In those communities, cleared home lots and outdoor lighting are now visible on the hillsides where once only trees had stood. At the same time, public waterfront access is disappearing.

In Bolton Landing, the owners of a local marina were offered \$6 million for the facility in 2004, but turned it down because the buyers intended to convert it to residential property. The village and the state are working on a deal whereby the village would own the marina, maintain it as a public park and preserve canoe-launch access to more than 300 island campsites on Lake George. The number of resort hotels in the Town of Bolton has decreased by nearly 60% in the last 35 years. The reason? All

of them were bought and converted into residential property. The Route 9N corridor is now so packed with strip developments, the ridgelines above the lake's western shore are bristling with new houses and outdoor lighting.

Even more disturbing for Park residents are the high prices being paid for homes and building lots. In the Central Adirondacks, the price of a lakefront lot has risen in the past 20 years from \$20,000 to \$200,000, Val Meixner, president of Mountain Lakes Real Estate in Speculator and Wells told the Utica Observer-Dispatch. Such prices are becoming routine.

In Saranac Lake, residents complain that even public school teachers – among the highest-paid public employees in the Park – are having trouble affording a home. The Council worked with the Governor, Sen. Betty Little, R-Queensbury, local government officials and the timber industry in 2004 to gain more than \$2 million in state reimbursements to Park communities for taxes lost when timberland tax abatements are granted to major landowners. The payments will lift the additional burden from local taxpayers of having to subsidize timber companies and other large landowners.

Because the Park is a mix of public and private lands, development pressure will never really go away, even after the Forest Preserve is consolidated and completed. As we have for the past 30 years, the Adirondack Council will continue in the years ahead to monitor the latest development proposals and to limit the impact of cyclical development booms on the Park's wild character and ecological integrity.

30 YEARS
1975 - 2005

Wildlife Returning

One of the best indications of a healthy ecosystem is one in which all of the original wildlife species still find a home there. The Adirondack Council's work to secure additional protection for Adirondack forests and its struggles to prevent the widespread use of chemical pesticides have paid rich dividends for the Park's wildlife over the past 30 years.

Combined with the federal ban on the use of DDT, stronger anti-pollution laws and better enforcement of game laws, many wildlife species have returned to the Park after years or decades of absence. Others have emerged from a period of extreme scarcity into a stable, protected population. Among them are: moose, fishers, mink, ermine, pine martens, Canada lynx, bobcats, otters, bald eagles, hawks, peregrine falcons, wild turkeys, cormorants, Indiana bats, timber rattlesnakes, and even a rare moth (protected via the conservation of the Clintonville Pine Barren).



timber rattlesnake



bald eagle



bobcat

Most of the Adirondack Council's toughest campaigns involve the protection of rare or sensitive wildlife. The Council's very first major research publication was "2020 VISION Volume I: Biological Diversity, Saving All the Pieces (available online at www.adirondackcouncil.org)," 1998.

Inclusion in 2020 Volume I is always the first standard by which the Council measures potential state land acquisitions.

How We Got Our Start

The Adirondack Council was created to defend the fledgling Adirondack Park Agency from hostile lawsuits and political pressures. At the time, development activity was peaking throughout the Park.

In Washington, Congress and President Richard Nixon were debating and passing the nation's first laws to control air and water pollution and protect endangered species. In New York, conservationists and local government officials stood together to stop an effort to create a national park in the Adirondack High Peaks. Local residents feared federal rules would drive private homes and businesses out of Lake Placid, Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake. Conservationists argued that the state was a better and more responsive steward of the land. But Gov. Nelson Rockefeller and the Legislature recognized there was a need to stem out-of-control development, which had been spurred by a strong economy and lack of land-use controls.

The Adirondack Park Agency Act of 1971 established the Adirondack Park Agency. The Adirondack State Land Master Plan was adopted in 1972. The two categorized public and private lands in the Park, set aside nearly a million acres as roadless Wilderness and set the first guidelines for land use and development.

This was a big step. No other state had created a regional land-use authority to protect sensitive natural resources and watersheds. Many similar plans would follow, but only because the Park Agency succeeded. If it had not, the California Coastal Commission, New Jersey Pinelands Commission and countless others like them might never have been created.

Developers and local government officials railed against the new APA. Some vowed to ignore the new laws. Others threatened to sue. It didn't take long for the latter to happen. In 1975, when the APA denied

Wambat Realty Company's proposal to subdivide 22,000 acres and build 801 formed-concrete houses on the shores of Silver Lake, Wambat sued. Wambat wanted the court to overrule the Adirondack Park Agency, eliminate or alter the land use plan, or declare the Adirondack Park Agency Act unconstitutional – or all three.

This prompted a group of concerned individuals and organizations to create an advocacy organization to focus solely on the protection of the six-million-acre Adirondack Park. The Adirondack Council was incorporated in 1975 by a coalition of local, regional and national conservation organizations who joined forces to form a council on which each group held a seat. The Council's first victory was the defeat of the Wambat challenge to the Park's protections.

Today, as an independent organization, the Council continues to serve as the "closest ally and staunchest critic" of the Park Agency, in successful advocacy for the Park's ecological integrity and wild character.



Crotty Steps Down at DEC

Erin Crotty, winner of the Adirondack Council's 2003 Conservationist of the Year Award and New York's first female Commissioner of Environmental Conservation, stepped down in January after nearly four years at the department's top job.

Crotty, 38, was presented with the Adirondack Council's top honor at our annual dinner in Lake Placid. Her work on acid rain, open space protection, watershed management, motorized-recreation planning and water quality initiatives made her an obvious choice. Gov. George Pataki stopped by unannounced to wish her

well and present his congratulations.

Denise Sheehan, DEC's Executive Deputy Commissioner, was appointed by the Governor to become acting commissioner.

Governor Pataki told the Associated Press that Crotty was "an effective leader whose professionalism and dedication were instrumental in the success of many of our most important environmental achievements."

The Adirondack Council was experiencing a delightful explosion in membership when I first visited their Elizabethtown headquarters in 1989. In three years, it had grown from 2,500 to 12,000. More than a decade later, the Council thrives as a guardian of the wilderness. And its mission is even more important today as development and environmental issues continue to challenge those who work and play here. Congratulations on 30 years of vigilance.

Dave Dudajek, Opinion page editor, Observer-Dispatch, Utica

Split Rock Wild Forest Plan Taking Shape

In September, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) released a collective Draft Unit Management Plan (UMP) for the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest, the Westport Boat Launch and the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site. UMPs are plans that are required to be developed for units of Forest Preserve which provide: a description of the unit and its historical uses; an inventory of the natural resources, manmade facilities and public uses; and overview of past management; and the plan proposes strategies for resource protection/restoration as well as facilities to be developed to manage human uses.

The Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest is a 3,700 acre unit located in the eastern Adirondack Park on the shores of Lake Champlain in the towns of Essex and Westport. The unit is home to many significant species and it is the largest tract of publicly owned shoreline on Lake Champlain. The unit offers numerous recreational opportunities and the ability to observe many different ecotypes and wildlife and plant species.

In summary, the Draft UMP includes proposals for:

- Trail System - The plan proposes to designate and mark approximately 9.0 miles of an existing trail system for hiking. This is in addition to the 1.7 miles of presently designated snowmobile trail. Trail registers will be installed and maintained on all designated trails.

- Mountain Biking - Approximately 5.0 miles of the trail system are proposed for use by mountain bikes.

- Parking - Three new accessible parking lots are proposed: two on the Lake Shore Road and one on the Clark Road to access Webb Royce Swamp.

- Fishing - The plan proposes developing an accessible parking lot at the Whallonsburg Fishing Access Site.

- Camping - the plan proposes to close the northernmost campsite on the shore of Lake Champlain, (due to lack of a suitable location for a box privy); while continuing the use of the four primitive campsites along the shore of Lake Champlain as part of the Lake Champlain Paddlers Trail System.

Although the Adirondack Council is pleased that the DEC is developing a UMP for this unique unit, we are concerned that not all of the proposals may be appropriate.

Currently, there is little data available on the number of people using the unit but the UMP includes proposals for three new parking lots. We believe that the UMP should inventory the number of users and propose new facilities, such as parking lots, based on the carrying capacity of the unit and the number of people actually using the unit.

Additionally, we have urged DEC to give more attention to the management of invasive species in the unit. Although the UMP gives a cursory recognition to the management of invasive species, we believe the UMP should identify a specific strategy to eradicate the invasive species in the unit, especially the purple loosestrife and phragmites that have moved into Webb Royce Swamp and are threatening the ecological integrity of this important wetland.

We also believe that the Split Rock Mountain Wild Forest is a unique and sensitive unit which warrants a holistic, ecosystem-based, landscape-scale approach to planning that incorporates adjacent land uses, such as the many agricultural lands, and also takes into account the unit's connectedness, via the Split Rock Wildway, with core wildlands to the west of the unit. Many animal species migrate between the shores of Lake Champlain and the expansive forested areas in the High Peaks region and this UMP should acknowledge the importance of connected blocks of wildlands for wildlife and ecosystem health.



The glorious Split Rock tract - 3,700 acres overlooking Lake Champlain.

I both congratulate and thank the Adirondack Council on the occasion of its 30th anniversary. Founded in a period when there were serious threats of overdevelopment of some of the most precious areas of the Adirondacks, the Council has become one of the most powerful forces for their protection. I and every citizen of this state who cherish the Adirondacks and the Forest Preserve, which is unique in the world, are indebted to the Council for its leadership.

May the next thirty years witness the Council's continued growth of its power and influence!

David Sive, Conservation Attorney, New York City

Council's Legal Vigilance Critical to Park Protection

The expertise of the Adirondack Council's legal team and the Council's determined pursuit to uphold the letter of the law for the Adirondack Park has resulted in critical policy decisions protecting the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondacks.

The Adirondack Council completed its successful *Campaign for the Forever Wild Fund* in 2004 raising \$4.4 million for the Board-directed operating-endowment. One of the purposes of the *Forever Wild Fund* is to give the Council the financial resources required to take legal action to protect the Park. Combined with membership support and donations to the Adirondack Council Annual Fund, resources from the Forever Wild Fund ensure the Council can move forward with legal action when necessary.

Consider the legal challenges that emerged seemingly from nowhere in 2004 alone:

Whiteface Mountain Rental Cabin Proposal: The Adirondack Council prepared and implemented a legal strategy within a matter of hours and halted a project that would have violated the Forever Wild clause of the NYS Constitution by allowing the lease of public lands (Forest Preserve) to private parties. The plan was also outside the scope of the Constitutional Amendment that allowed the creation of the state-run Whiteface Mountain Ski Center.

Statewide Emergency Radio Network: The Council had to react quickly when it found that a radio manufacturer hoping to bid on the statewide wireless emergency radio network (SWN) contract maintained that hundreds of new communications towers would be needed throughout the Park. The towers would be built on public and private mountain peaks and would require navigational warning lights and fuel storage tanks with generators for emergency power. The Council told the media that such a plan would violate the Forever Wild Clause and the requirements of the State Land Master Plan. The Council promised it would sue if such a plan were approved and began consultation with its litigation team. Within a week, Gov. George Pataki stated publicly that the technology chosen to fulfill the state contract would not

require any new towers on the Forest Preserve and only a handful or fewer on private lands within the Park. The rest will be co-located on existing structures.

Canadian Pacific Rail Road Towers: CP Rail officials started constructing 150-foot-tall towers last summer without any permission from the Adirondack Park Agency. The APA has jurisdiction over any structure taller than 40 feet. CP claimed that federal law allowed it to ignore local zoning. When the APA told CP Rail to stop, CP Rail sued the APA in federal court. The Council prepared a legal case and was about to join the suit on the side of the APA when CP Rail dropped its own suit to keep the Council from becoming a participant and entered into private negotiations with the state for much shorter towers.

Frankenpine: Nextel's most recent attempt to build a cell tower disguised as a pine tree at Pilot Knob, overlooking Lake George's eastern shoreline, is the third try in as many years. This latest application to the Adirondack Park Agency comes after the Town of Fort Ann twice refused to grant a variance from its residential zoning code, and after a lawsuit in which cell phone service was declared to be a public utility and therefore exempt from the town's zoning code. Cingular was the first applicant, followed by Nextel, which withdrew its original plan in November 2004, asking instead for a shorter tower. Hearings were slated to begin at the end of January. The Council's legal team will present testimony from expert witnesses, including a renowned photographer, art historians and others on assessing the visual impacts of new structures.

Public Hearings: The Council drafted testimony and sent staff members to deliver it at public hearings from Rochester to Ray Brook, NY and from North Carolina to Chicago in 2004, on topics including: the federal Clean Air Interstate Rule; the faltering Raquette Lake municipal water supply; the Wanakena Water Company's plan to rebuild its system on the Forest Preserve; and, New York State's new acid rain regulations for power plants.

Congratulations on thirty years of distinguished service to the Adirondack environment! Peggy Lynn, Adirondack Singer/Songwriter

30 YEARS
1975 - 2005

Wilderness

Classification of public Forest Preserve lands (2.7 million acres) of the Adirondack Park determines their level of protection and allowable uses by the public. Since 1975, the Council has advocated for expansion and additions to Wilderness areas in the Park, while pushing state and federal funding for land acquisition from willing sellers. Motorized access is prohibited under the Wilderness designation, protecting wildlife habitat from traffic, noise and pollution.

Today the designation covers 1.1 million acres of the Park in 16 separately managed Wilderness units. The Council played a key role in the acquisition and designation of the 15,000-acre Little Tupper Lake parcel on the Whitney Estate in 1997. The Council successfully urged the state to combine the two areas into the William C. Whitney Wilderness Area in 1998.



IP Conservation Deal Nets New Recreational Options

Following through on Gov. George Pataki's commitment to shift major snowmobile trails away from the interior of Forest Preserve lands and onto private lands, state officials completed an agreement with International Paper in December to open more than 100 miles of new trails, mainly in St. Lawrence County.

Rather than sharing Forest Preserve trails with hikers and cross country skiers, snowmobilers would be encouraged to move on to the timberland trails, which already host cars, trucks, all-terrain vehicles and log skidders. Officials said more than 100 miles of trails would be opened for public use over the next five years. Several existing trails will be made permanent and new routes will be added.

IP woodlands manager Joe Hanley told the press the new trails would represent a five-fold increase in what is currently available to the public in the northern Adirondacks. After the paper company's review, routes will be designated by the state Department of Environmental Conservation. Perkins Clearing, a 22,850-acre parcel north of Speculator, will be among the first of the parcels protected from development and opened to public recreation. DEC's map shows an east-west snowmobile route.

Jim Jennings, executive director of the 22,000-member New York State Snowmobile Association, said clubs have had trails on IP property for years, in some cases paying leases. "With the advent of this deal, clubs will no longer have to pay a lease, which

we think is positive," he said.

There are some 1,200 miles of designated snowmobile trails around the state (about 80 percent on private land) and about 170,000 snowmobiles registered statewide. Snowmobiling is an important and growing part of the Adirondack winter economy. Many businesses could not remain open if they did not benefit from the tourist money associated with snowmobiling. The Council will work with IP, state officials and local residents to find appropriate new routes.

In the deal announced in April by Gov. Pataki, the public will get full recreation rights to more than 84,000 acres of the IP holdings parkwide, allowing hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, canoeing and other uses. The state will acquire partial rights for hiking and snowmobile trails on another 171,000 acres that will remain under hunting club leases. The state will also buy 2,000 acres outright, between Lake Lila and Bog Lake.

The state expects to pay IP \$20 million to \$25 million, subject to appraisals. The company will continue to own the land, cut and grow trees, and get a property tax break. The deal was the largest ever announced in the state's history and will protect nearly ten percent of the Park's privately owned land from future development. The Council played an important part in working with IP on the future use of its land and making working forest conservation easements eligible for state EPF money.

"It's difficult to imagine anything more worth preserving in the State of New York than the Adirondack Park... I am truly appreciative that the Adirondack Council is there every day, working to keep the park forever wild. I wish the Council a happy anniversary and many more years of vigilance for this beloved land."

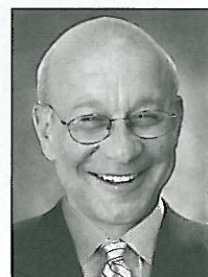
Bob Keeler, Editorial Writer, Newsday

The Council Welcomes New Board Members

Charlie Canham is a forest ecologist with a Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from Cornell University (1984). Since 1984, Charlie has been a member of the scientific staff at the Institute of Ecosystem Studies, in Millbrook, NY. He has authored or co-authored over eighty peer-reviewed scientific publications in ecology in the past twenty years. Charlie is looking forward to working with the Council to face the very real threats to the Park on a number of fronts, including air pollution and inappropriate development.



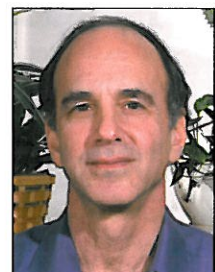
Bob Kafin is an environmental lawyer, Chief Operating Partner & General Counsel of Proskauer Rose LLP living in New York City and Bolton Landing. Since the early 1970s, Bob has closely followed events affecting land use and preservation in the Adirondacks. Bob is looking forward to lending his knowledge and experience to the Council's efforts in developing sound public policy for the Park.



Ann Carmel joins the Council Board with a lifetime of experiences in Brant Lake where her family has owned property for over 100 years. When she's not in the Park, Ann lives in New York City and is the principal and manager of a private investment fund. The Park is an integral part of Ann's life and that of her three children, and she is looking forward to helping preserve the character of the mountains, water and air.



Jim Sonneborn has enjoyed spending time in the Adirondacks since the 1950s. Jim is a lawyer with the firm Sonneborn, Spring & O'Sullivan in Syracuse. He has worked on various issues related to water quality in the Park for many years. Jim is involved in strategic thinking on the Park, its future and how we can appropriately enjoy it.



Give a Legacy for the Adirondacks

Please consider joining the Council's ADIRONDACK LEGACY SOCIETY by including the Adirondack Council in your estate planning and giving a legacy to protect the Adirondack Park.

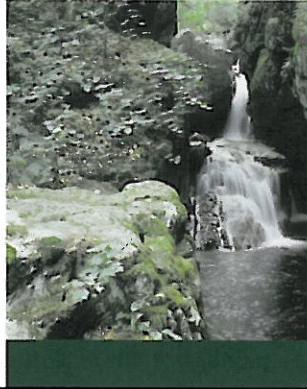
All gifts received by the Adirondack Council through estate planning become part of the Council's FOREVER WILD FUND, an operating endowment set aside for special projects and long-term financial support to help the Council protect the Park long into the future.

Anyone can make a planned gift and every gift makes a difference. For a copy of our legacy gift brochure, please contact Diane Fish at 877-873-2240 or dfish@adirondackcouncil.org. Thank you!



THE ADIRONDACK COUNCIL
Defending the East's Last Great Wilderness

GIVE A LEGACY
FOR THE
ADIRONDACKS



"Having lived in Saranac Lake as a child and then spending summers there, I have a deep appreciation for the special character of the Adirondacks. I wanted to ensure that those who came after me could enjoy this wonderful place in the same condition as I had. I felt the best way to do this was to leave a bequest in my will to the Adirondack Council.

The importance of the Council in protecting the integrity of the Adirondack Park cannot be overemphasized and my nine years as a board member only reinforced this belief. The Adirondack Council is the only Adirondack environmental organization with the financial resources, dedicated staff, and public education program to do this. I hope that many of our members will follow my example."

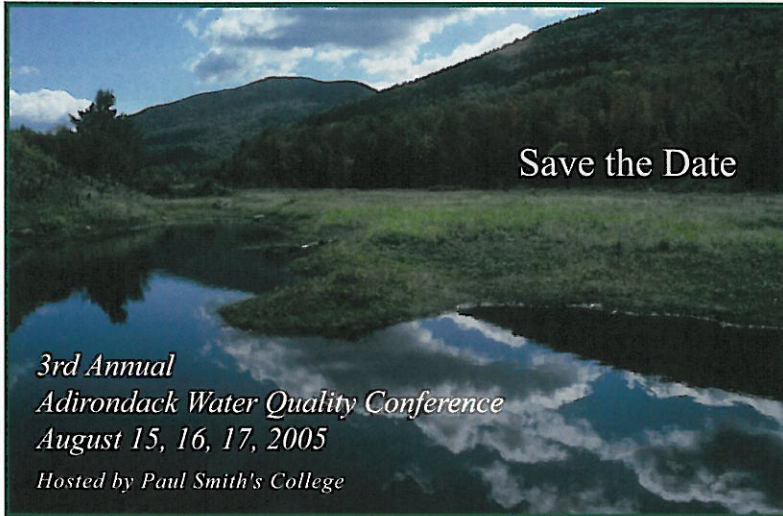
Joanne Waldron Dwyer

Greetings from the opposite end of New York State!

Although we like to brag about our beaches here on Long Island, I am one Long Islander willing to say it: the Adirondacks are the most beautiful part of New York and also one of our most vital.

Congratulations to the Council for 30 years of hard work. Here's hoping that New Yorkers from every corner of our great state recognize the outstanding resource that we have and pitch in to help preserve it.

Doug Geed, Anchor, News 12, Long Island



Save the Date

*3rd Annual
Adirondack Water Quality Conference
August 15, 16, 17, 2005*

Hosted by Paul Smith's College

Adirondack Water Quality Conference

The third annual Adirondack Water Quality Conference will gather representatives from state and municipal government, Lake and River Associations, non-governmental organizations, and the scientific community to focus on developing policy recommendations and an advocacy agenda for presentation to New York State's Invasive Species Task Force. Organizing support by the Adirondack Watershed Institute, The Adirondack Council and other public agencies and private organizations.

For more information please contact: Dan Keltling, Adirondack Watershed Institute 518-327-6213 or keltind@paulsmiths.edu.

It's Great to Speak with You

Thank you to all members who responded to last fall's telephone fundraising campaign! Our annual calling campaign helps us to raise a significant portion of the funds needed to meet special challenges and opportunities in Adirondack Park protection each year. It also gives us the opportunity to hear your concerns about current issues and opportunities in the Park.

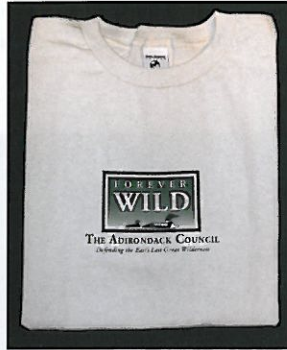
Your gifts are used judiciously. The "Pennies for Charity" report, issued by the NYS Attorney General's Charities Bureau in December, presented data from 592 charity telephone campaigns conducted in 2002-03. This report is prepared to show the public how much of their contributions directly supports charitable programs rather than overhead or administrative costs.

The Adirondack Council placed in the top seven percent of the 592 registered not-for-profit organizations in retaining the highest amount of money raised for program expenditures. Thank you for taking the time to talk with us and for fulfilling your pledge to the Council. In turn, we pledge to do our absolute best on behalf of this great Adirondack Park.

The Adirondack Council offers gift items to help raise the funds we need to fight for the Adirondack Park every day. Whether it's a Clean Air Certificate to remove a ton of pollution that causes acid rain or our new Forever Wild T-shirt...every item purchased helps the Council protect the natural resources of the Adirondack Park.

“FOREVER WILD” ORGANIC COTTON T-SHIRT

Be wild! The Adirondack Council's new t-shirt is made of 100% organic cotton. Featuring the Adirondack Council “Forever Wild” logo, this t-shirt is “natural” color. X-Small, Small, Medium, Large (Sizes run large. Call for measurements.) **\$15**



FOREVER WILD CAP AND TOTE BAG

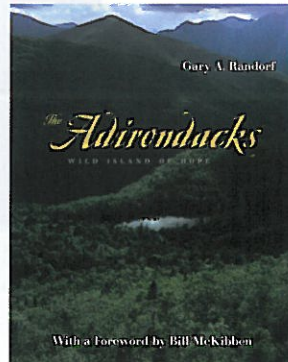
This tan and sage baseball-style field cap is made of 100% cotton. **\$15**

The everyday tote bag is made of 100% cotton and measures 15.5” tall and 19” wide with comfortable 22” cotton web carrying handles. **\$12**



SINGING LOON TOY

This symbol of wilderness sings a beautiful loon song with just a gentle squeeze. For children of all ages. Five inches tall. **\$12**



“THE ADIRONDACKS: WILD ISLAND OF HOPE” BOOK BY GARY RANDORF

One hundred full-color photographs combined with a unique blend of Randorf's favorite “random scoots,” conservation ethic, and side trips into natural history. **\$23**

CLEAN AIR CERTIFICATE

For each gift of \$50 the Adirondack Council will permanently retire one ton of acid-rain-causing pollution reducing the total amount of acid rain that can fall in the Adirondack Park. The recipients will receive a clean air certificate in their name. **\$50**



GIFT MEMBERSHIP

Please consider giving a gift membership to someone you know who cares about the Adirondacks, clean air and water, wild places, and rural communities. Memberships begin at \$35 and recipients receive a packet of recent publications along with a card announcing your gift. Give a gift membership and help us continue to grow the strength of our advocacy for wilderness, water, and wildlife.

IT'S EASY TO PLACE AN ORDER! YOU CAN:

1. Make your purchase on our secure website at www.adirondackcouncil.org.
2. Call toll-free 1.877.873.2240 M-F 8:30 am - 5:00 pm. (Visa or MasterCard)
3. Download an order form from our website or call our toll-free number and we will mail one to you!

Proceeds benefit Adirondack Park conservation. Free Adirondack screen saver with every purchase!

30 YEARS
1975 - 2005

The Bob Marshall Great Wilderness

In 1992, the Council published a 24-page booklet focusing on the opportunity to create the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness from a group of existing western Adirondack Wilderness areas. The proposal was called *A Gift of Wildness: The Bob Marshall Great Wilderness*. Bob's father Louis had led the fight at the 1894 Constitutional Convention to create the "forever wild" clause to safeguard the Park's public lands.

Bob spent his first 22 summers exploring the forests around the family camp on Lower Saranac Lake. He and his brothers were co-founders of The Wilderness Society. In the 1930s, Bob conducted an extensive survey for the federal government – at his own expense – to identify every area in America containing 300,000 acres or more of roadless landscape. He found fewer than 50. One was in the western Adirondacks. Remarkably, by 1992, the area Bob first identified and explored still contained no public highways and no communities.

When the Council first published *A Gift of Wildness*, only 50 percent of the proposed 408,000-acre preserve was protected as Forest Preserve, or under no-development agreements with private landowners, known as conservation easements.

Today, fully 85 percent of the proposed "Bob"

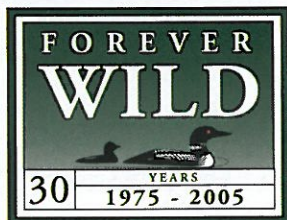
has now been permanently protected from development through easements and acquisitions, the assistance of the Environmental Protection Fund, the 1996 Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act, conservation groups such as the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and The Conservation Fund, and landowners such as the International Paper Co., Champion International and Whitney Family.



For 30 years, the Council has often used as a motto and inspiration, Bob Marshall's quote:

"There is just one hope of repulsing the tyrannical ambition...to conquer every niche on the whole earth. That hope is the organization of spirited people who will fight for the freedom of the wilderness."

Robert Marshall



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