

NEWS IN AND ABOUT THE SIX-MILLION-ACRE ADIRONDACK PARK

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Hearing Begins for Adirondack Club and Resort

Largest project ever before the APA

In March the Adirondack Park Agency reconvened the adjudicatory hearing on the permit application for the 6,400-acre, 750-unit Adirondack Club and Resort (ACR) project slated for the Big Tupper Ski Area and surrounding lands. While the Council is primarily concerned with protecting the environment, another of our organizational objectives is to revitalize local communities. The Council supports the concept of this project as advancing that objective, but subject to conditions protecting environmental quality. The project proposal has improved since its original design, and few issues remain to be debated. The developer has stated his need to finance some of the project with the early sale of large lots on the periphery of the site. But these parcels should have restrictions on further subdivision and allowable building. The rest of the project should be properly phased, beginning with the ski center and surrounding housing units. The Council will continue to participate in the hearing process to ensure that environmental concerns are all fully met.



Hudson River Gorge

Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.

Governor Cuomo's First Budget Completed

Environmental agencies and funds see equity

As part of his 2011-12 budget, Governor Andrew Cuomo proposed to keep the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) at last year's approved level of \$134 million, with \$17.5 million for land acquisition. This steady level of funding, agreed to by the Legislature, was a major victory in a year when many other areas of the budget were facing dramatic decreases. Another benefit to the environment is that no money was "raided" from the Fund and no non-traditional programs were added to the Fund. Unfortunately, the final budget gave a 10 percent across-the-board reduction to state agencies, including the DEC and APA. The EPF and environmental agencies had seen disproportionate cuts over the last three years.

The Legislature was able to restore funding for the Tug Hill Commission, which had been proposed to be eliminated. The Commission provides guidance for local planning in the area immediately west of the Adirondack Park and serves as a model for other rural regions. The Legislature and Governor agreed to fund the Commission with the same 10 percent reduction that other agencies are receiving.

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unless otherwise noted.



Opportunity is Knocking

Spring 2011 is a time of rapid change in the Adirondack Park, as one of the coldest and snowiest winters on record comes to a close and the first green sprigs of the new growing season emerge and unfurl. The last of the ice and snow is melting into rivers and streams, swelling lakes and ponds to the brim.

In Albany, new Governor Andrew Cuomo has completed his first budget negotiation with the state Legislature, reaching an agreement in time to meet the April 1 deadline. I am pleased to report that we did not have to organize mass demonstrations or rally citizens to the Capitol to protest cuts to the Environmental Protection Fund as we did in 2010. Unlike the previous administration, Governor Cuomo's budget didn't gut environmental spending. Your response to this crisis was heard loud and clear in Albany.

The Governor is also signaling an interest in reforming local governments in an effort to cut wasted spending and to reduce local property tax burdens. The Adirondack Park contains all or part of 92 towns, 12 counties and 12 villages and dozens of school districts and other special taxing districts. That's a lot of government for a small population of year-round residents. Consolidation and sharing of services will be the goal. These actions will also benefit the environment by reducing the financial strain on landowners that encourages subdivision of undeveloped land.

A host of state commissioners and agency directors will be appointed by the Governor in the coming months. Five members of the Adirondack Park Agency Board of Commissioners will see their current terms expire by June 30. New appointees must be approved by the state Senate, which is now Republican controlled. The Governor, a Democrat, will need to find candidates with bipartisan support.

One appointee who was readily accepted by the Senate was new Commissioner of Environmental Conservation Joseph Martens. A long-time colleague of the environmental community, Martens enjoyed universal support in his recent confirmation. Martens is familiar with a broad range of Adirondack issues, and will be a champion for the Park's environment and communities.

In other good news, the release of new U.S. Census data in March showed that 10 of 12 counties in the Adirondack Park saw their populations grow between 2000 and 2010, a reversal of the decline reported in 2000.

At the Adirondack Council, we see change as an opportunity. Together with new and expanding coalitions of local officials, economic development organizations and environmental leaders, transformative change for good is possible. The challenge is now to take advantage of emerging opportunities and move toward our long-term vision with deliberate and achievable steps to get us there. With your support and involvement, we will meet our objectives to help reform governance and policy, protect critical lands, revitalize communities, improve water quality and reduce air pollution. Together, we will ensure a thriving Adirondack Park for this and future generations.

Brian L. Houseal, Executive Director

Go to our website – www.AdirondackCouncil.org – for more information.

CAPITAL MATTERS: ALBANY AND D.C.

New York Legislative Session in Full Swing

Water withdrawal bill heads the Council's priorities

Since January, the state Senate and Assembly have been meeting in Albany to consider many legislative initiatives. While the budget has been the main focus, one of the other issues important to the Adirondack Council is gaining momentum. Legislation is being considered to empower the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to require a permit for large-scale water withdrawals of 100,000 gallons per day or more. Currently, there is no DEC regulation of this activity. The legislation, sponsored by the Environmental and Conservation Committee Chairs in both houses, has broad support from the environmental, agricultural and business communities. A version of the bill was passed by the Senate last year, but was not considered by the Assembly. We are hopeful that both houses will pass the bill on or before Earth Day and that Governor Cuomo will sign it into law.

Some of the Council's other priorities include legislation dealing with invasive species controls, smart growth measures, and efforts to limit mercury in consumer products and ensure proper disposal. The legislative session is scheduled to run through late June.



New Congressional Representatives

Council carries Adirondack message to DC

In March, the Council's legislative team headed to Washington to meet with the staff of all of the Congressional representatives whose districts include part of the Adirondack Park. Two of the three members of the House were newly elected last November. Reps. Chris Gibson, R-Kinderhook, and Richard Hanna, R-Utica, now represent the east and west sides of the Park respectively.

Our federal budget priorities include funding for 1) acid rain monitoring; 2) the Forest Legacy program, which helps states protect open space; and, 3) the Northern Border Regional Commission, which provides funding to help communities and the environment in our four-state region.

The Adirondack Council is also seeking the introduction of legislation, once again, to reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, the pollutants that cause acid rain. While the EPA is finalizing a rule on these emissions, it is likely that litigation will hold up the rule for several more years.

Through the Forest Legacy program, the federal government has agreed to provide \$8.5 million in matching funds to help the state of New York purchase the Follensby Pond tract from the Nature Conservancy.



Above: New Senate Environmental Conservation Chair Mark Grisanti, R-Buffalo (L), retires six tons of carbon dioxide through the Adirondack Council's Cool Park/Healthy Planet program. Presenting Grisanti with his carbon reduction certificate is Council Legislative Director Scott Lorey (R).

ACTION UPDATE

Thank you to all of our members who have responded to our recent calls to action. Be on the lookout for more action alerts in the near future. You will soon be hearing from us about the EPA's new proposal to limit mercury and other harmful toxins from power plants.

Time does not always allow us to use the mail for our alerts.

Please be sure we have your current e-mail so we can let you know when your comments are urgently needed.

Please send your name and e-mail to foreverwild@adirondackcouncil.org

Thank you!



IN AND ABOUT THE PARK



Tupper Lake

Resort hearings begin



The hearings for the largest development project ever to come before the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) began on March 16. The hearings will cover various issues of concern to the APA. The Council is a party to the hearings and will offer expert testimony on issues related to wildlife habitat and conservation design. The Council supports a project permit with conditions.

Greig

Changes to challenged ATV law

In March, the Lewis County Board of Legislators approved an amendment to its 2009 law opening up several county roads as part of the county ATV trail system. The recent action included the closing of certain roads in Greig and Turin, while opening others. These changes come at a time when a local Adirondack Council member is suing the county over the original law. The roads around her property were closed by this action, leading to speculation that this was an attempt to nullify her lawsuit.

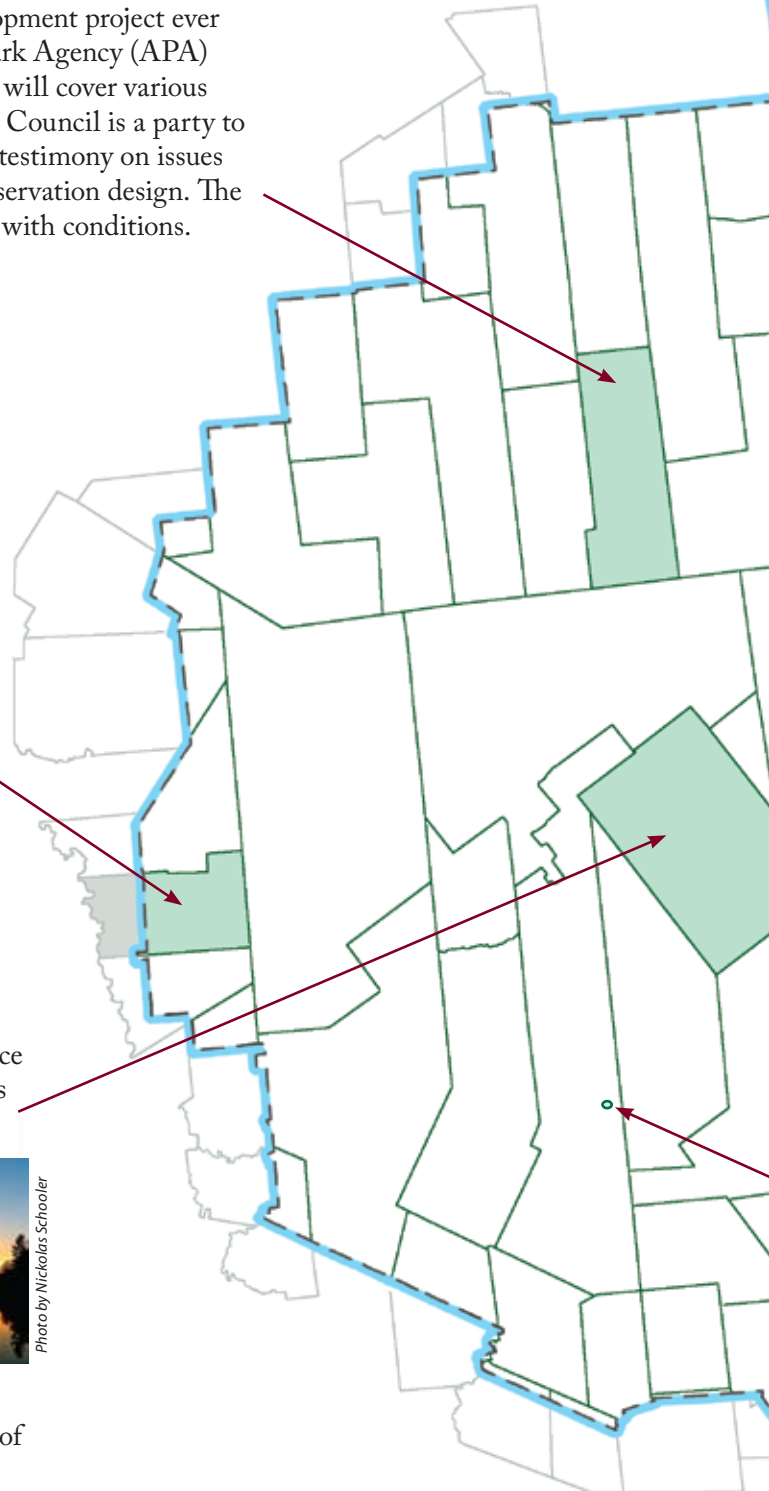
Indian Lake

Water ways

A local developer's plan to cluster a 4-lot subdivision on Resource Management land (42 acres per primary building) on the shores of Utowana Lake, is raising concerns by local residents and the Adirondack Council about the application of clustering concepts, the protection of water quality, and access along a traditional canoe portage between Blue Mt. Lake and Raquette Lake. The project highlights the need for Adirondack Park Agency (APA) reform to develop a clustering policy and a water classification system to provide stronger protection for wetlands, lakes and streams. At the March APA meeting, the plan was approved with conditions. Development of each parcel will be reviewed by the APA.



Photo by Nickolas Schooler



Keene/Lake Placid

Trail or road

The Department of Environmental Conservation has decided to review a decision made by the former commissioner that maintains town jurisdiction over old roads on the Forest Preserve that were not properly “abandoned.” The test case involves the section of the Jackrabbit cross-country ski trail that runs from Lake Placid to Keene through the Sentinel Range Wilderness. The Council is a party to legal proceedings, as the decision will impact miles of trails through the Adirondack Park’s most protected areas.



Westport

Making room to grow



A small hamlet on the shores of Lake Champlain, Westport is seeking a map amendment from the Adirondack Park Agency that will expand the Hamlet area, allowing more densely constructed homes in a specific area of the town that could tie

lots into the town sewer line. The town is also the site of a new proposal to create a 60+ unit private club on a former estate that would include shared waterfront amenities and a farm to supply the on-site restaurant and provide visitors with an opportunity to get back to the land as part of their unplugged vacation experience.

Schroon Lake

Watershed Management Plan

Several state agencies, municipalities and lakeshore associations worked diligently towards protecting Schroon Lake as a valuable economic and environmental resource. The solution: a comprehensive review of the state of Schroon Lake and its watershed, outlining considerable information related to the lake and surrounding lands. The plan makes recommendations to guide communities in their planning decisions and monetary appropriations.

Irondequoit Inn, Piseco

Join us on July 9th

The Irondequoit Inn on Piseco Lake was established in 1892. The 600-acre property includes a mile of shoreline, a spectacular hike along Mill Brook, and a 5-acre island with trails and a swimming spot. During Forever Wild Day on July 9th the Council will honor the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program with the Conservationist of the Year award.



Photo courtesy of Eric and Liz Davis

LANDS AND FORESTS



Economy Revives Old Opposition

Historic land acquisitions challenged

New York State has every intention to fulfill their promise to purchase former Finch Pruyn Company lands (58,000 acres) and the Follensby Pond parcel (14,700 acres), both currently held by the Nature Conservancy. The economic crisis in New York State has injected new life into efforts by long-time opponents that have challenged all acquisitions for the Forest Preserve in the Adirondack Park for decades. Some government bodies have passed resolutions stating their opposition to any future land protection, arguing that the state can't afford to buy more land, blaming the weak economy on land protection, and inaccurately arguing that money set aside for land acquisition would somehow come to Adirondack towns in another form (i.e. teacher salaries, Medicaid payments, retained government jobs). Thankfully, the new state budget includes funds for land acquisition (\$17 million) and agency officials remain committed to adding the gems of Finch and Follensby to the Forest Preserve as soon as possible.

Building public support and political will to move these acquisitions forward, the Council's public outreach provides facts about the acquisition process and the value of these critical lands to the environment and the recreating public.



Former Conservation Director for the Adirondack Council (2005-2010) **John Davis** is pursuing his conservation dream, *TrekEast*, with the help of our conservation colleagues at Wildlands Network. John is traveling on foot, bike and boat from Key Largo to Canada's Gaspé Peninsula exploring the wilds of the east and bringing attention to the importance of connectivity and people in protecting important wildlife habitat. Visit our website **AdirondackCouncil.org** for links to *TrekEast's* blog, Facebook page, and Twitter feed (the most up-to-date way to follow John's adventure).

International Year of Forests, 2011

Why trees matter

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests to bolster efforts to promote sustainable management, conservation and development of forests worldwide and to recognize the central role of people.

The theme of "Forests for People" celebrates the multiple values of forests and the need for a 360 degree perspective: forests provide shelter to people and habitat to biodiversity; forests are a source of food, medicine and clean water; and they play a vital role in maintaining a stable global climate and environment. All of these elements taken together reinforce the message that forests are vital to the survival and well-being of people everywhere, all 7 billion of us.



The Council is asking the state to hold an international conference in New York State to draw attention to our 19 million acres of forest and the need for invasive species funds to mitigate the threat from damaging invasive insects.

Foresters Brace for Emerald Ash Borer

Just a matter of time

The destructive invasive pest Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has now infested the forest regions surrounding the Adirondack Park including the Catskill Forest Preserve. Many species of ash trees are the insect's target including white, black, green and blue ash. The EAB cannot be eradicated, but its spread can be slowed, the current goal of foresters and officials in the Division of Lands and Forests at the Department of Environmental Conservation. One current strategy for slowing the damage to ash trees involves creating isolated "sinks" of infested trees to attract the insect



Emerald Ash Borer
Photo courtesy NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation

to one isolated area. Hopefully, this will give municipalities and the state more time to inventory and prepare for a costly clean-up. There is also a native wasp that preys on the insect, but the secondary impacts are unknown and this approach has yet to be widely tested. The Council's advocacy for the Environmental Protection Fund helped secure \$3.8 million for invasive species eradication in the FY 2012 budget. The Council advocates for policies, programs and funding to reduce the negative impact of all invasive species that could degrade the ecological integrity of the Park.

SUPPORT THE ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

The North Face and Black Diamond Equipment Raffle

To benefit Adirondack Park conservation

On Friday, July 22, 2011, the Adirondack Council will raffle off outdoor gear generously donated by The North Face and Black Diamond Equipment. Raffle tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. The drawing will be held at the Council's office in Elizabethtown, NY at 12:30 pm (EST).

(Ticket holders need not be present to win.)

Each ticket will provide opportunities to win one of the following:



- Roadrunner 23 Tent
- Terra 35 Pack
- RE Meow Sleeping Bag



Black Diamond

- Trail Shock Trek Poles
- Apollo Lighting
- Spot Head Lamp

For more information about the raffle items and to purchase tickets visit www.AdirondackCouncil.org or call us toll-free 877.873.2240.

Adirondack Legacy Society

Estate gifts protect the Park for future generations

By becoming part of the Adirondack Legacy Society with an estate gift to the Adirondack Council, you can ensure the natural heritage of the Adirondacks will be protected for future generations. By naming the Adirondack Council in your will or as a beneficiary of life insurance or unused retirement assets, your generosity will create a lasting legacy for Adirondack Park protection. An estate gift of any amount is greatly appreciated. All estate gifts are pooled in our Forever Wild Fund and used only for special projects with approval from the Board of Directors. Your financial or legal advisor can guide you through the various options in order to make arrangements that consider your individual circumstances, your family needs and your charitable goals. For more information, contact Diane Fish, Director of Fund Development, 877.873.2240 ext. 106.



CARBON REDUCTION CERTIFICATE

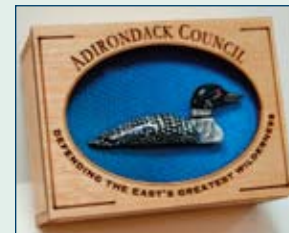
Help reduce your carbon footprint!

For a \$25 contribution to the Council's Cool Park/Healthy Planet program, we will permanently retire three tons of carbon dioxide from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), the nation's first multi-state effort to reduce carbon emissions.



LOON PINS AND PULLS

Loon with chick pins and zipper pulls are cast in fine pewter, a jeweler's alloy which provides an antiqued look.



Our hand-painted common loon pin is 1 3/4" long x 1/2" high. **\$25.00**
The Adirondack Council laser engraved hardwood box is a

perfect way to present your loon pin or pull. Box measures 2" wide, 3" long and 1" deep. **\$4.00**

NOTE CARDS



Our new note cards feature the common loon, symbol of the wilderness. The photograph by Carl Heilman (top of page)

completes the set with the images pictured here. Photo by Diane Fish and drawings by Sheri Amsel (above, right) and Anne E. Lacy (left). Packages include two of each card. **\$8.00**

You can place an order for these and other products by calling the Adirondack Council at 877.873.2240 (toll-free) or order online at www.AdirondackCouncil.org

Proceeds from sales benefit Adirondack Park conservation.



ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness

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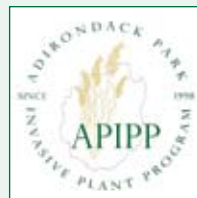
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Come join us at the Irondequoit Inn in Piseco, NY on July 9, 2011 for the Adirondack Council's annual Forever Wild Day. Help us celebrate the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) as the Adirondack Council's Conservationist of the the Year.



- Explore the 600-acre preserve of the Inn located on the shores of Piseco Lake.
- Celebrate the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) as the Adirondack Council's Conservationist of the Year and help us recognize their efforts to protect the Adirondack region from the negative impacts of non-native invasive species.
- Enjoy remarks by special guest speaker Charlie Canham, Forest Ecologist at the Cary Institute for Ecosystem Studies.
- Hear about the history of the Irondequoit Inn, established in 1892, the same year as the Adirondack Park.
- Learn from the staff of APIPP about how to identify invasive plants and remove them properly.
- Discover outdoor opportunities in the Piseco area on one of our guided walks or on your own.



Go to www.AdirondackCouncil.org for details about activities and lodging.

As we head to press with this Spring newsletter, plans are in high gear for our annual Forever Wild Day on July 9, 2011.

The Adirondack Council gratefully acknowledges the following businesses, organizations and individuals who are generously sponsoring the Forever Wild Day.

- Finch Paper LLC
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- International Paper
- Open Space Institute
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- Fiddlehead Creek Native Plant Nursery
- The North Face
- Black Diamond Equipment
- Mountain Mugs
- Bambu
- Carrie Cups
- Lakeside Office Products

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Photos courtesy of Eric and Liz Davis