






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

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New York State Buys Essex Chain of Lakes for Preserve

Wild Rivers Wilderness Soon Possible

In late December 2012, Governor Cuomo announced the state purchased the 18,300-acre Essex Chain of Lakes tract from the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and said he would add the parcel to the “Forever Wild” Adirondack Forest Preserve.

The state expects to open the tract to public access in the fall. It is located in the heart of the Adirondack Park, in the towns of Newcomb and Minerva, Essex County. This area has been off-limits to the public for more than a century.

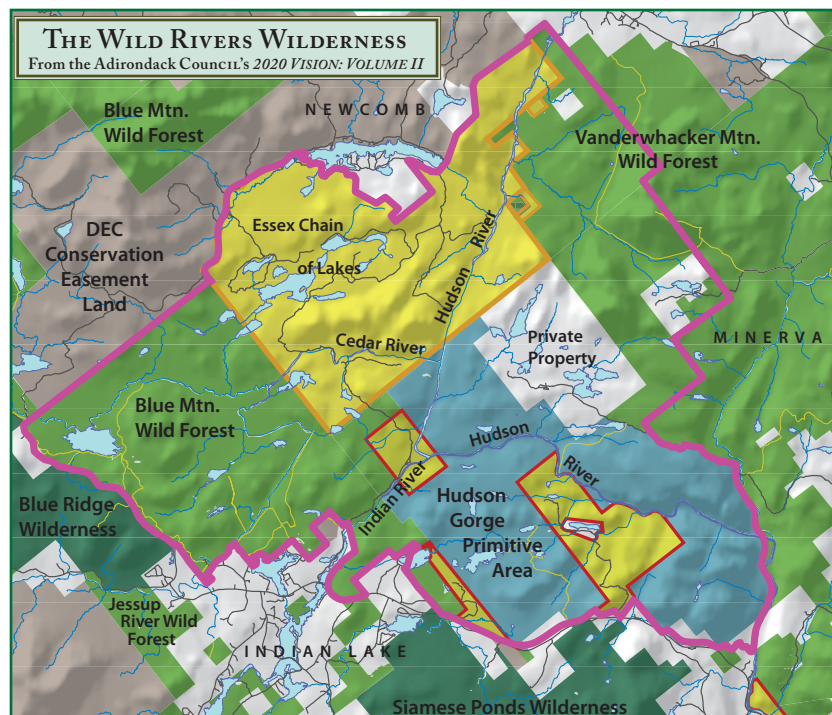
The property contains nine interconnected, pristine lakes and wild sections of the Hudson and Cedar rivers. The landscape is biologically diverse, hosting a variety of forest and aquatic species. It features steep mountain slopes, large wetlands and hundreds of miles of shoreline. It is part of the 161,000 acres that the Nature Conservancy bought from Finch, Pruyn & Co. in 2007.

Since 1990, the Adirondack Council has been urging the state to create a new Wild Rivers Wilderness in this location, if the lands were ever acquired by the state. This proposal combines the Essex Chain of Lakes tract with existing Forest Preserve to create a 72,000-acre roadless area, which would become a new paddlers’ and hikers’ paradise, and serve as an economic engine for Indian Lake, Minerva and Newcomb. See our website for more details on our proposal.

Unfortunately, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has proposed a much less ambitious Wilderness area, which would keep 13,000 acres of the Essex Chain Parcel as Wild Forest and open to motorized vehicles. The Council will be urging DEC to adopt our proposal.



Source: DEC



The Adirondack Council's Wild Rivers Wilderness proposal combines the Essex Chain of Lakes tract with existing sections of the Blue Mountain Lake and Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forests and all of the existing Hudson Gorge Primitive Area. The plan also includes the Park's most spectacular waterfall (OK Slip Falls), Blue Ledges and the confluence of the Indian and Hudson Rivers.

- Pink Border** - Adirondack Council's Wild Rivers Wilderness proposal.
- Yellow Border** - Essex Chain of Lakes tract recently purchased by the state.
- Red Border** - former Finch lands planned to be purchased by the state.

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Newsletter photos by Adirondack Council staff
unless otherwise noted.



Dan Wolk, Council Board Chair Ann Carmel, Justin Potter, Acting Executive Director Diane Fish, Emily Potter, and Council Board member Sherry Nemmers reconnect at a Council event in New York City, January 2013.

Adirondack Balance

Striving for equilibrium

Adirondack Council founding director Clarence Petty lived in and around the Adirondack Park for 104 years. In all his decades of fighting for environmental protection measures, there were times when things didn't go very well, when he grew discouraged and needed to take a break. When the constant vigilance and struggle of environmental activism started to wear on him, he always retreated to the Adirondack Wilderness to regain his equilibrium. "In the wilderness, everything is in balance," Clarence was fond of saying.

There has been a lot of talk about balance over the past few months in debates surrounding Adirondack Park issues. Too often, the idea of balance has been offered as an oversimplified solution to complicated issues. The most common instance is the idea that environmental protection and economic development are polar opposites, each battling for supremacy. This feeds the perception that protecting some places inside the Park means we must then sacrifice others in order to achieve balance.

In all parks, environmental protection is - and should be - a top priority. In the Adirondack Park, half of the land is privately owned and 132,000 people live year-round in and around 130 hamlets and villages. Does the fact that state law so carefully protects the Forest Preserve mean that the other half of the Park should be a free-fire zone where any kind of development and resource exploitation is okay? If so, we would not have a Park for very long.

Here, a balance must be struck that protects environmental quality everywhere and bolsters opportunities for economic prosperity that are attuned with environmental protection. More than ever, protecting the Park's lands and waters ensures a sustainable future for the tourism and hospitality businesses that are the backbone of its 21st century economy. It is the equilibrium of the whole that will safeguard the future of the Park's environment and communities.

In the years ahead, the state will decide how to manage the 69,000 acres of new Forest Preserve it has agreed to purchase around the Essex Chain of Lakes, Hudson Gorge, OK Slip Falls and High Peaks. State officials should take into consideration how little roadless wilderness remains east of the Rocky Mountains. They should seek environmental and economic opportunities that are rooted in equilibrium that committed advocates of the Park - like you - are striving to secure for future generations.

Diane W. Fish, Acting Executive Director

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

CAPITAL MATTERS: ALBANY



Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

Governor Proposes to Expand EPF

First growth of fund in five years

In his recent budget proposal, Governor Cuomo called for an expansion of the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) by \$19 million to a total of \$153 million. This would be the first increase since 2008 when the EPF was at an all-time high of \$255 million. The \$19 million would come from a portion of the unclaimed nickels from the bottle bill and enforcement provisions associated with that law.



Tens of millions of dollars from the EPF have gone to open space protection, waterfront revitalization grants, landfill closures, and public boat launch enhancements in the Adirondacks. The EPF Open Space Account will be relied upon over the next five years for the purchase of the lands formerly owned by Finch, Pruyn & Co. The EPF's total currently sits at \$134 million. This year, the Friends of New York's Environment, a coalition of New York stakeholders who support the EPF and all that it funds, asked the governor and legislature to increase the EPF to \$164 million. The legislature has until April 1st to act on the governor's budget proposal.

ACTION UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who wrote letters or sent faxes to the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) opposing the proposed General Permit (GP) for clear-cutting areas over 25 acres. The APA Board of Commissioners postponed a decision on the GP after receiving 200 letters voicing concern over the proposal. The APA plans to initiate a stakeholder process to determine policy and permit reforms that will encourage the best science-based forestry practices in the Adirondack Park. You can view the Council's comments on the GP by visiting the Resources section of our website.

In the months ahead, please be on the lookout for opportunities to submit public comments regarding how the state plans to protect and use the newly acquired Essex Chain of Lakes tract. Your input will be important and make a difference. Thank you!

Tightening the Cap on Carbon

RGGI program set to change

Throughout the fall, the Adirondack Council has remained actively engaged in the stakeholder review process for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a 10-state carbon allowance trading



program designed to reduce climate-altering emissions. The Council has strongly advocated throughout this process for a reduced carbon cap that would provide

incentives for carbon-emitting electric power plants to implement cleaner technologies. RGGI is expected to come out with a newly proposed carbon cap this winter.

As the only environmental group to participate directly in the auctions for allowances, the Council permanently retires carbon allowances through our member-supported Cool Park/Healthy Planet program. To participate in the program, visit www.AdirondackCouncil.org.




In his *State of the State* message in January, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said he would create a new summer event in the Adirondack Park to spur tourism. In announcing the Adirondack Whitewater Challenge, the governor said he would raise a six-person, mixed-gender team and race against similar teams raised by other government officials. No further details have been announced. Top of this page: the confluence of the Hudson and Indian Rivers, part of the 69,000 acres Governor Cuomo agreed to purchase from The Nature Conservancy by 2016.



Finch Lands

State buys Essex Chain

Over the next five years, the state is purchasing 69,000 acres of former Finch paper company lands (on the map in yellow ) currently held by The Nature Conservancy. The 18,300-acre parcel known as the Essex Chain of Lakes, the first purchase made in December, is in or near the Adirondack communities of Indian Lake, Blue Mountain Lake, Long Lake, Newcomb and Minerva. For more information and a detailed map go to <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/42077.html>.



The pristine Essex Chain of Lakes is a series of interconnected lakes and ponds that will allow paddlers to travel for dozens of miles through the Adirondack Park. State officials expect to open this newest tract of Forest Preserve by fall. The land was purchased with the Open Space account of the NYS Environmental Protection Fund. Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

Inlet and Raquette Lake

New snowmobile trails

Last fall, the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) constructed an 11-mile “multi-use” trail from Limekiln Lake/Cedar River Road in the Town of Inlet, to Sagamore Road in the Town of Long Lake, near the hamlet of Raquette Lake. The purpose of this route is to connect communities and eliminate the need for interior trails that cause more environmental impact. The Council has shared with DEC our concerns about the cutting of almost 2,000 mature trees to create the new route. See article on page 6.

Inlet

Wastewater treatment plant

The Adirondack Council helped the community of Inlet celebrate the ground breaking for a new sewage treatment plant. Local officials worked tirelessly for years to secure the funding needed to ensure the project could move forward. The treatment plant will provide water quality protection for Fourth Lake and the rest of the Fulton Chain of Lakes, and allow the town to expand its business base in the hamlet.

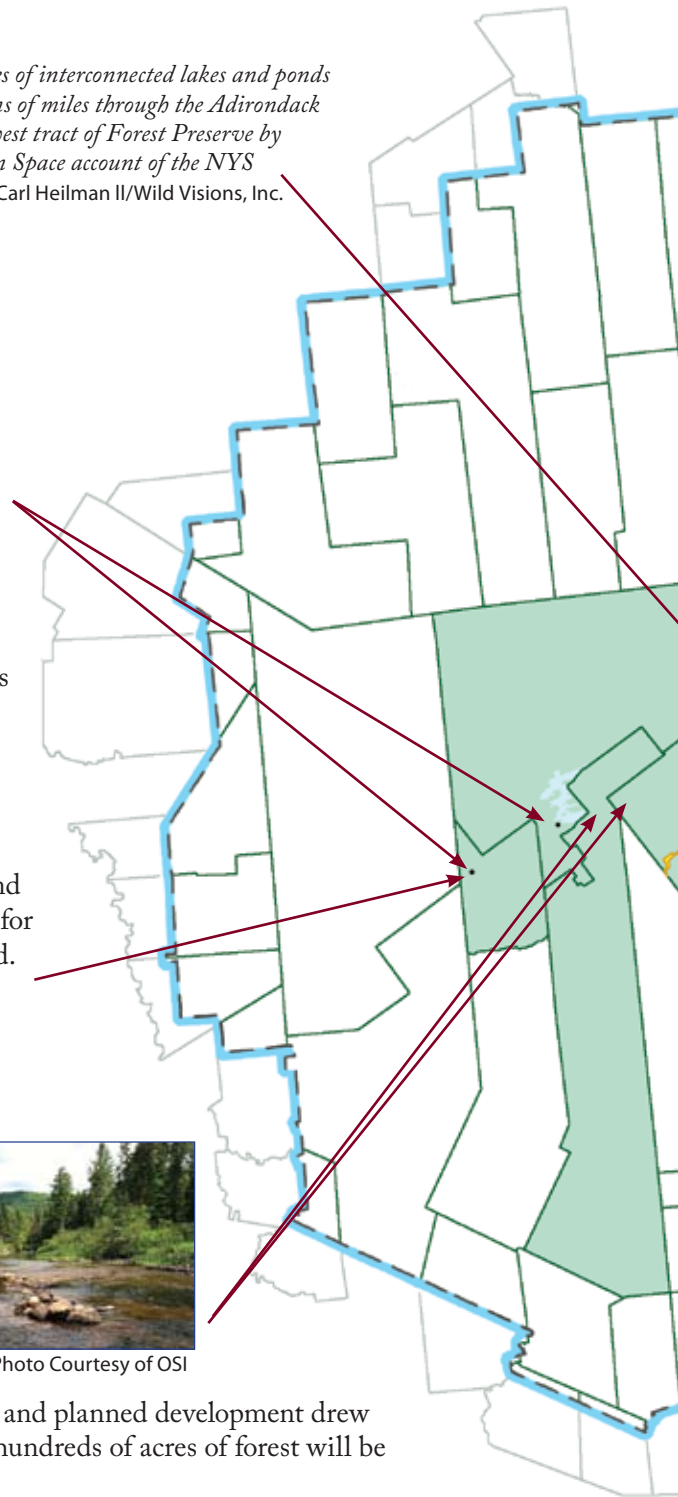
Indian Lake and Arietta

Historic portage preserved

In early January, the Open Space Institute (OSI) purchased 295 acres surrounding the canoe route known as the Marion River Carry. The century old portage has been a popular canoe route between Utowana and Raquette lakes in the towns of Arietta and Indian Lake, Hamilton County. The property’s recent subdivision and planned development drew concern from many. OSI’s acquisition guarantees the canoe carry and hundreds of acres of forest will be protected and available for public use.



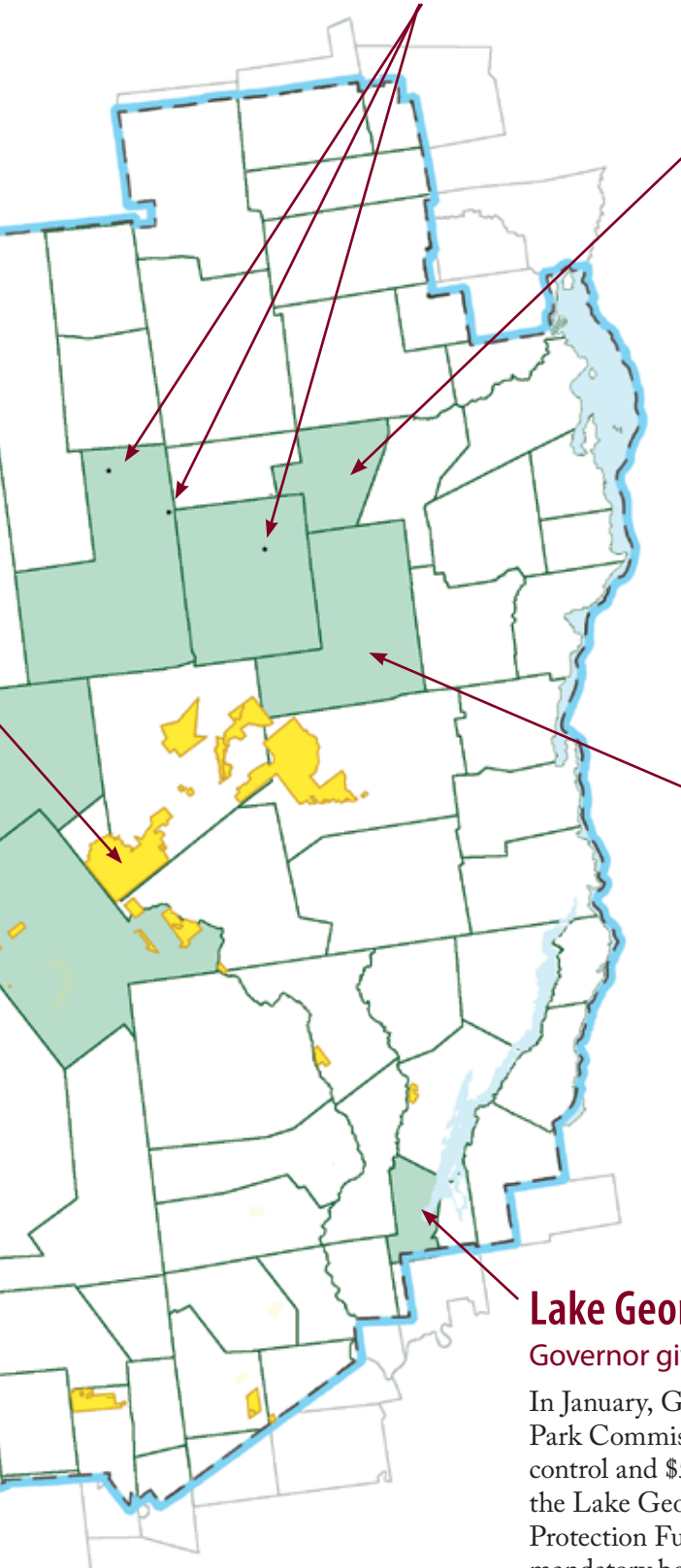
Marion River Photo Courtesy of OSI



Lake Clear/Saranac Lake/Lake Placid

Three eco-friendly tourist hotels win awards

The Adirondack Council's *Forever Wild Partners* Hohmeyer's Lake Clear Lodge and the Golden Arrow Lakeside Resort as well as Gauthier's Saranac Lake Inn, were recently recognized for achieving Audubon International's Platinum 5 Leaf Status. The rating is bestowed upon lodging businesses that have met stringent guidelines in energy conservation, natural resource preservation, guest education and outreach. Environmentally minded businesses play a valuable role helping visitors understand and connect to the Adirondack Park.



Wilmington

Bicknell's Thrush grants

Interested in protecting the habitat of the rare Bicknell's Thrush, a coalition of conservation groups, including the Adirondack Council, authorized the first grant to a conservation organization on the island of Hispaniola, the bird's winter habitat. The Bicknells also nest on



Photo © Larry Master, masterimages.org

Whiteface Mountain and other high-elevation sites in the Adirondacks. The Adirondack Council worked to ensure that recent permits for construction and military training on Whiteface include conditions that account for the bird's breeding season. In response to a petition from the Center for Biological

Diversity, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has agreed to consider listing the Bicknell's Thrush under the Endangered Species Act. The Adirondack Community Trust accepts donations to the Bicknell's Thrush Protection Fund at www.generousact.org.

Keene

Learning in the field

This fall, Adirondack ecologist Ray Curran shared his expertise with Professor John Wargo's undergraduate students from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. A hike up Baxter Mountain with Adirondack Council staff was one of many interactions the students had to help them understand the environment and culture of the Adirondack Park.



Lake George

Governor gives funds to control invasives

In January, Governor Cuomo announced he would provide the Lake George Park Commission with \$200,000 in additional funding for invasive species control and \$50,000 to help pay for a voluntary inspection program run by the Lake George Association. The money will come from the Environmental Protection Fund. However, the Governor did not support a proposal for mandatory boat inspections at all boat launches on Lake George even though it was endorsed by a broad-based coalition of groups.

FORESTS AND WATERS



Recreation and Tourism

Strengthening the Adirondack economy

The Adirondack Park Recreation Planning Committee is undertaking a major project to improve access to recreation information about the Adirondack Park. The committee is part of the Adirondack Partnership, a project of the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages. The committee was awarded a grant of \$108,000 during the recent round of state funding through the Regional Economic Development Councils. The grant will help create an Adirondack Park Recreation Web Portal for tourism and recreation-related amenities and activities within the Adirondack Park. The grant will be implemented through the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council (Plattsburgh) and will also involve the Center for Economic Growth (Albany) and Cap-21 (Old Forge). The Adirondack Partnership is also using funds awarded last year to engage consultants to help develop an economic strategy for the Park compatible with its unique opportunities and challenges.

These projects represent the efforts of a diverse coalition of citizens, elected officials and organizations working to ensure that the Park's communities thrive in balance with our vast protected areas. The Council is a member of the Adirondack Partnership.



Snowmobile Trail Development Continues

Council seeks lighter footprint on Forest Preserve

The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has been plowing ahead with construction of “community connector” snowmobile routes on the Adirondack Forest Preserve. The Adirondack Council has sued the DEC twice claiming that constructing wider, flatter trails and using mechanical groomers is a violation of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, and would alter the character of the Preserve. The Council lost both suits on procedural issues, after the Adirondack Park Agency approved the DEC's approach.

The Adirondack Council doesn't oppose snowmobiling on carefully designed trails and understands that snowmobiling is an important part of the winter economy in some Park communities. But the Council remains concerned about the health and integrity of the “Forever Wild” Preserve — especially when snowmobiling may have a limited future due to climate change. The Council will continue to work toward an improved trail system that complies with state laws and the NYS Constitution's Forever Wild Clause, and protects the ecology and wild character of the Forest Preserve.

The DEC has demonstrated an effort to minimize environmental damage by removing interior routes that don't connect communities, siting the routes on old logging roads when possible and staying within one mile of existing travel corridors in most cases. The Council has requested that the DEC provide a comprehensive overview of its trail-widening, tree-cutting and rerouting plans so it can assist the agency in making the new trails as environmentally sensitive as possible. It is possible that the use of these community connector multi-use trails for hiking and mountain biking can benefit communities with a lighter environmental footprint.

The Council is also concerned that all-terrain vehicle (ATV) advocates will push to use these trails when snow cover is too slight to allow snowmobiling. ATV riding is the most destructive form of recreation currently allowed in the Park.

iMapInvasives Spring Training Sessions

Data needed on location of invasives

iMapInvasives is the online mapping system used to track invasive species threatening New York State's natural resources. All interested groups, including land managers, citizen scientists and educators, are encouraged to help keep the map up-to-date and accurate by reporting invasive species locations and management efforts. Training is required to enter data, and the NY

Natural Heritage Program will be offering free sessions throughout the state this spring. In addition to data entry training, an introduction to a decision-making tool for invasive plant management will also be offered. Visit www.NYimainvasives.org for schedule details and registration, and contact imainvasives@nynhp.org with general questions.

iMapInvasives in NYS is managed by the NY Natural Heritage Program.



OLD FRIENDS AND NEW FACES

Annual Council Gathering

Thanks to the hospitality of our hosts John and Margot Ernst



Council Board member John Ernst, his son Matt and Amy and David McNamara discuss which "books on tape" they enjoy listening to while driving up to the Adirondacks.



Board member Rob Garrett and Director Emeritus Curt Welling catch up on Adirondack Council news.



Longtime Board members David Bronston and Toby Thacher reunited.



Richard Weinstein, Antonia Ness, David Rockwell and Board member Sherry Nemmers share their passion for the Adirondacks!

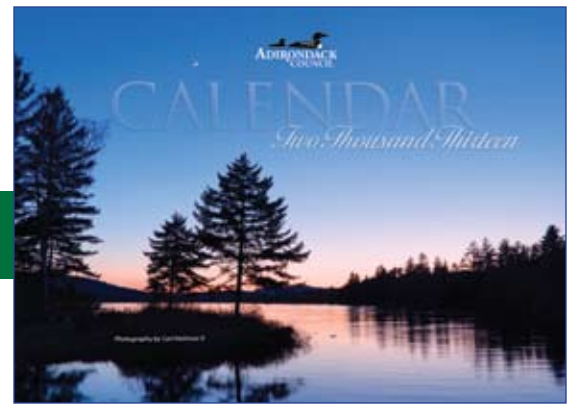
Staff Changes



Congratulations to **Kevin Chlad** who was recently promoted to the position of Legislative Associate in the Adirondack Council's Albany office. Kevin first joined the Council as a Clarence Petty Intern and was later hired as the manager of the Albany office. In his new role as Legislative Associate, Kevin will assist with outreach to government officials on policies that affect the Adirondack Park.



Maura Pickett was recently hired as the Program Assistant to provide daily support and assistance for the Albany-based Government Relations and Communications programs. Maura graduated from Northwood School in Lake Placid and received her Bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies and Political Economy from the College of Idaho. In her free time, Maura likes to hike, kayak and travel.



2013 FOREVER WILD CALENDAR

Featuring the Adirondack landscape photography of Carl Heilman II, the Adirondack Council's 2013 calendar brings you into the Park with Carl's breathtaking images. \$13

ON SALE - \$6 (supply limited)

You can place an order for this and other products by calling the Adirondack Council at 1.877.873.2240 (toll-free) or ordering online at www.AdirondackCouncil.org

Proceeds from sales benefit Adirondack Park conservation.

Clarence Petty Intern

Meet Anna Sapak



Anna Sapak is the newest Clarence Petty Intern working in the Council's Albany office. Anna is a second-year Master of Public Administration student at the University of Albany's Rockefeller College, focusing

on Nonprofit Management. She is a 2010 graduate of Michigan State University, where she studied Interdisciplinary Humanities and Environmental Studies. Anna enjoys canoeing, hiking and experimenting in the kitchen. She is very excited to continue exploring all the Adirondack Park has to offer. The Council's internship program seeks to carry on the legacy of Adirondack conservation activist Clarence Petty (1904 – 2009).

ADIRONDACK COUNCIL is a member of



Thank you to Adirondack Council members who contribute through their EarthShare workplace giving campaigns. We appreciate your interest in protecting the Adirondack Park. Contact EarthShare today to talk about bringing EarthShare to *your* workplace!
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ADIRONDACK COUNCIL
Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness

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2013 Forever Wild Day Saturday, July 13, 2013 New York Ranger School in Wanakena, NY



Photo courtesy SUNY ESF Ranger School

Each summer the Council heads to a different Adirondack Park community for our annual members' meeting and recognition of our Conservationist of the Year. This year, join us in Wanakena on July 13, 2013 at the SUNY ESF Ranger School situated on the shores of Cranberry Lake. Wanakena is one of the featured gateway communities in the Bob Marshall Wild Lands Complex. Bring your canoe or mountain bike, explore the arboretum and enjoy the historic community and the company of other Council supporters.

Visit www.AdirondackCouncil.org or call 1.877.873.2240 for information about lodging, recreation and other visitor opportunities in the area.

Visit Our New Website

News, resources and action opportunities

We designed our new website with you in mind! Please visit the site, sign up for e-newsletters and take a look at the easy access to recent Adirondack Council media outreach, action alerts, official public policy comments, and social media activity. The site has resources for students and links to other Adirondack organizations and state agencies. We also hope you'll find some educational and inspiring gifts in our online shop. Many of the items are made in the Adirondacks, supporting our local authors, artists, and entrepreneurs. We welcome any feedback you may have. Feel free to send us a message through the "contact us" button on the top of the homepage. Our website was designed and is maintained by the talented people at ES11 in Latham, NY.

