

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

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Keeping New Adirondack Lands Forever Wild

Draft plan that fell short on motor-free protection is withdrawn

The state of New York is being urged by the Adirondack Council to follow through on commitments to expand and protect wilderness and support Adirondack communities. The Adirondack Park Agency (APA) and Governor, with support from the Council, made the decision last winter to protect as “motor-free” over 36,000 acres including the Hudson Gorge and Essex Chain Lakes purchased from the Adirondack Nature Conservancy. As part of that decision, limited adjoining lands were identified for seasonal motorized use including snowmobiles, but not all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

Legally, the next step is for the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to prepare one or more detailed unit management plans (UMPs). The UMPs will instruct the DEC on how to use, protect, manage, and promote access to the newly acquired Essex Chain Lakes and surrounding lands based on the best available science. The Council and others have advocated that the state simultaneously prepare UMPs for the Essex Chain Lakes parcel plus the Hudson Gorge Wilderness and adjacent state lands.

Unfortunately, when DEC released the first draft management plan for the Essex Chain Lakes it did not reflect the APA’s resolution approving a motor-free classification for the lakes. The draft plan didn’t expressly prohibit motorized traffic on the interior of the Essex Chain, and didn’t include the thorough ecological analysis required of UMPs. The plan also left out critical information related to implementation of the new snowmobile route.

In August, the Council applauded NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Joe Martens for withdrawing the flawed draft Essex Chain UMP. The Council had joined with other environmental organizations, and additional stakeholders, to call for its withdrawal. The DEC expects to produce a new draft plan for public review before the end of the year.



Above: The Essex Chain Lakes Primitive Area. Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.

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Newsletter photos by Adirondack Council staff
unless otherwise noted.



Taking a Stand

Because it matters

Last year the Adirondack Council took stands on expanding wilderness, supporting vibrant communities, protecting clean water and healthy air, and supporting family farms and working forests. In our newsletters, annual report, "State of the Park" report, and on our website, we shared with you those positions and the results.

When the Council takes a stand, we are guided by our mission, vision, principles, new strategic objectives, and values, science, an understanding of political decision making, and input from stakeholders. There are times to compromise, to win more wilderness for example. And, we are never afraid to plow ahead with our convictions even in the face of opposition.

We always look for partners to stand with us. And we respect those disagreeing with our priorities. By being idealistic, pragmatic, and flexible, we build mutual respect and can collaborate with others. Collaboration produces results.

One of the issues the Council has taken a stand on is all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use in the Adirondack Forest Preserve. We have long opposed the use of these off-road recreational vehicles on state lands in the Park, except for search and rescue or by special permits allowing limited access for people with disabilities. We have supported vehicle and traffic laws. And, the Council has not opposed responsible use of ATVs on private lands, or for farming or logging.

ATVs are off-road motorized vehicles that because of their knobby tires, size and ability to go almost anywhere, have a unique capacity to negatively impact clean water, ecology, wildlife, other users, and the wild character of public Adirondack lands. ATVs can cause damage that other recreational vehicles, such as snowmobiles, vehicles on roads, motorboats, and planes, do not. We need to make sure the state is smart about when, where and how ATV use is allowed.

At pivotal moments in Adirondack Park history, conservationists, hunters and anglers, environmentalists, and elected leaders have stood together and taken stands on issues impacting our wilderness, clean water or private land use. The Council invites partners to join with us to take a stand on when and where ATVs are used so that water, wildlife and the Adirondack Park are protected. Thank you for your support.

William C. Janeway
Executive Director

The mission of the Adirondack Council is to ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park for current and future generations.

We envision an Adirondack Park with clean water and air and large wilderness areas, surrounded by working farms and forests and vibrant local communities.

CAPITAL MATTERS: ALBANY

Adirondack Victories in Albany

Major achievements deserve thanks

Coalitions of Adirondack, wilderness, clean water and community advocates and the Adirondack Council, celebrated passage of an array of positive legislation and defeat of bills we opposed. Highlights included passage of the Invasive Species Prevention Act, the Invasive Species Uniform Signage Act, the Climate Risk and Resiliency Act, and the Dark Skies Act. Both invasive species bills and the climate risk bill have been signed into law by Governor Cuomo. Efforts to expand riding opportunities for ATVs into the Forest Preserve, and allow larger off-road vehicles, were opposed and defeated. Council members deserve a special thank you for the letters, emails and phone calls that helped make this happen!



Looking Forward: 2015 Legislative Session

There's much to do

This fall, the Adirondack Council has actively engaged with legislators, agency staff, local governments, and fellow stakeholders to develop Adirondack priorities for the 2015 New York State budget. The Council will advocate for more investment in our crumbling state infrastructure to provide clean water, increased stewardship of Forest Preserve lands, reliable transportation for residents and visitors, and opportunities for appropriate business expansion. Also, the Council will remain an integral partner in advocating for the Environmental Protection Fund by calling for increases in monies for land protection, invasive species mitigation, state land stewardship, and other programs. Other priorities include securing funding for the Department of Environmental Conservation's Assistant Forest Ranger Program and a 2015 NYS Ranger Academy, as over 50 percent of Forest Rangers are eligible for retirement in the next six years.

This past spring and summer thousands of members and supporters signed petitions that addressed the illegal trespass of ATVs on Forest Preserve lands and the protection of Adirondack water quality.

Thank you! Your action and involvement on these issues is essential to our shared goal of protecting the Adirondacks.



Above: Adirondack Council Legislative Director Kevin Chlad and NYS Assemblywoman Margaret M. Markey (D-Queens). In September, the Council recognized members of the NYS Legislature whose efforts in the 2014 session better protected the Adirondack Park from threats, including climate change, invasive species and all-terrain vehicle trespass. These members actively engaged with Adirondack stakeholders, spoke on behalf of the Adirondacks in legislative conference and voted in the interest of the Park in legislative session. The awards presented to them are a token of gratitude for their efforts.

Underfunded Infrastructure

DiNapoli report calls for funding

In September, NYS Comptroller, Tom DiNapoli, released a report detailing the drastically underfunded infrastructure of New York State. According to the report, New York spends one-third of what is needed on an annual basis to maintain wastewater and drinking water systems as well as roads and bridges. As a result, rural local governments are forced to spend money to patch potholes and fix broken water lines, rather than plan for the future of their communities.

The report also indicates that on clean water programs alone our state underspends by roughly 80 percent annually. For communities in the Adirondacks, this can mean losing economic development opportunities because they lack the infrastructure needed to support new businesses and protect water resources. In the long-term, this also holds devastating potential for the overall health of community waterfronts.

New York State can address this issue by increasing funding to help rural communities with clean water projects, and to leverage more federal monies. The Adirondack Council will work with the governor, the legislature and an array of stakeholders to increase funding for clean water projects, transportation, state land management, open space protection, and Adirondack tourism.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

October 2014

Dear friends and supporters,

Thank you for caring so deeply about the Adirondacks. Your love of the Park's waters, mountains, and communities inspires us. Your support for the Council's programs and projects ensures we consistently get the results that are necessary to sustain the Park.

The reason the Council matters is clear. Political actions – policies, regulations, laws, funding – shape the Adirondack Park. Spurred by our collective passion for the Adirondacks, the Council uses our knowledge of issues, science, law, and the political process to protect clean water and air, expand wilderness, strengthen communities and prevent damage to the Park's resources.

The Council's distinctive strengths are clear. Chief among them is the fact that the Council has a seat at the table when important decisions are being made that impact the Adirondacks. Our input is requested. Our voices get heard. Here's why.

Government officials appreciate our values and our clearly articulated principles. The Council builds community through respectful dialogue, collaborative partnerships, progressive ideas based on the best available science, and cooperative teamwork. As one State Assembly person said when addressing Council members in the Park this summer "the Adirondack Council is known to be an honest broker."

This year the Council worked with the governor, towns and others to secure new wilderness and motor free protections for 36,000+ acres including the Essex Chain of Lakes in the central Adirondacks. When the Department of Environmental Conservation appeared to back away from the State's commitments, the Council researched and advocated with partners, resulting in state leadership changing course to honor its wilderness commitments. This is the kind of impact we can have together, making a positive impact on the decisions that shape the future of the Adirondacks.

The work on behalf of the Park and its communities is far from finished, but because of your inspiration, support and engagement, the Adirondack Council is strong, respected, and successful.

Again, thank you!



With gratitude,

Ann E. Carmel
Board Chair

The mission of the ADIRONDACK COUNCIL is to ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the ADIRONDACK PARK for current and future generations.

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JULY 1, 2013 - JUNE 30, 2014

Listed below are individuals, foundations and corporations that have given gifts of \$250 or more to the Adirondack Council's operating fund. The commitment of ALL Council members and donors to a wild and resilient Park, makes the Adirondack Council the largest, most effective advocacy organization working on behalf of New York's six-million-acre Adirondack Park. Thank you for caring about the Adirondacks!

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ADIRONDACK COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENT HIGHLIGHTS 2013-2014

Some recent accomplishments of the Adirondack Council, our advocacy partners and members on each of the Council's five interconnected 2014-2020 strategic objectives:

WILDERNESS: Ensuring the wild character and ecological integrity of the Adirondack Park and Forest Preserve:

- Governor Cuomo signed the classification for 34,000 acres of new Hudson River Gorge Wilderness, and a motor-free Essex Chain of Lakes, after the Council, partners and towns helped the Adirondack Park Agency develop a plan for protection and access.
- Council members and partners advocated for wolf friendly policies to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- The Council helped defeat proposals that would have expanded ATV use on public lands in the Adirondack Park.

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES: Supporting a more resilient, sustainable Adirondack Park, with vibrant communities:

- New Forest Preserve lands provided communities with additional public access and opportunities for eco-tourism.
- Council members advocated to the Federal Communication Commission against a proposal that threatened the policy in the Adirondack Park of expanding cell service while keeping new towers well hidden.
- The Council made the case that new oil trains through the Adirondack Park threaten hamlets and water bodies including Lake Champlain. State and federal governments pledge to take action.

CLEAN WATER & AIR: Fighting for clean water and clean air; combating invasive species and climate change:

- The Supreme Court upheld U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations long advocated by the Adirondack Council that will significantly reduce acid rain causing emissions.
- New York State announced a 45 percent reduction in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) emissions cap, followed by another 15 percent reduction. The Council supported the first cut, and was pushing for another 20 percent cut.
- The Adirondack Council advocated for three pieces of legislation that passed. The bills will help combat the spread of aquatic invasive species, encourage "dark skies" by limiting state facility light pollution, and help reduce the impacts of climate change by improving planning for severe weather events.

FORESTS & FARMS: Preserving open space and supporting working forests and farms:

- The Council successfully advocated for a state budget that included a one million dollar increase in state farmland protection funding and the Governor announced that the Department of Agriculture and Markets will make \$20.5 million in grants available for farmland protection projects in the Adirondacks and statewide.
- The Governor and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) embraced the Council's conditions for biomass support: smart biomass based on material from sustainably managed forests and healthy biomass with air pollution controls to protect public health.

LEADERSHIP: Leading, expanding and diversifying the Park's constituency:

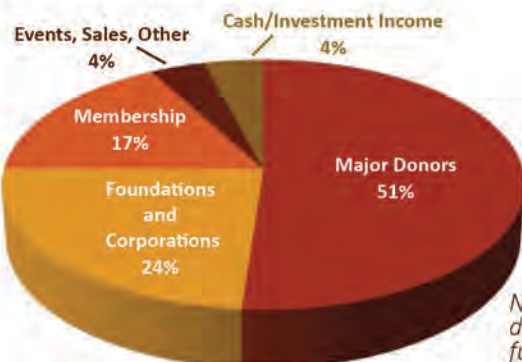
- Thanks to efforts by a coalition of 125 organizations, the New York State budget expanded the Environmental Protection Fund by nine million dollars, from \$153 million to \$162 million, and announced more funding for stewardship of state lands and for "smart growth" planning grants to local communities in the Adirondacks.
- Voters passed two Constitutional Amendments that met the Council's criteria, most importantly net benefits to the Adirondack Forest Preserve and Park.

SOURCE AND USE OF FUNDS SUMMARY

Fiscal Year July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

Source of Funds

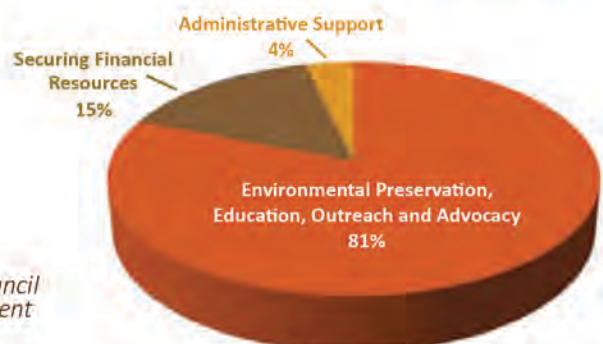
\$1,577,143



Note: the Adirondack Council does not accept government funding of any kind.

Use of Funds

\$1,577,143



In addition to operating support, the Adirondack Council received \$354,921 in new gifts and bequests toward the Council's operating reserve -- the Forever Wild Fund.

You can view the Adirondack Council's IRS 990 at www.AdirondackCouncil.org or at www.guidestar.org. A complete audited financial statement can be obtained by calling the Adirondack Council at 877.873.2240, on our website, or through the office of the New York State Attorney General.

CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS



Conservation Plan Out for Review

Good plan – funding needed

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has released the 2014 State Open Space Conservation Plan for public review and comment. Theoretically updated every three years, this plan guides the use of the Environmental Protection Fund for land and easement acquisition and discusses other ways to protect open space across New York State. These protection efforts mirror many of the objectives found within the Adirondack Council's strategic plan including protecting natural resources and wildlife habitat, ensuring clean water, air and land, supporting vibrant and resilient local communities, promoting working landscapes, and working to address climate change.



As members of one of the Regional Advisory Committees, Council staff have been active participants in the multi-year revision process. Public comments on the draft plan will be accepted until December 17 and will include input from a series of public hearings that are being held across the state in mid-October. The plan is good, but of limited value without new state funding commitments for priority Adirondack open space land acquisition projects. For more information on the plan visit the DEC's website or scan the QR code.



Protecting Wilderness and Access

The current debate

Much of the recent news surrounding the new additions of land into the Forest Preserve have centered on the topic of access. Central to the current debate is the discussion around “universal access” and the belief that public lands need to be available to the public across the entire spectrum of users.

This belief that land held in public trust is meant to be enjoyed and celebrated by everyone is universally lauded by all. Quite simply, access matters. But so does the type of access and the impacts it can have over time on the places we value and the things that make places important.

While subtle, the distinction between “access” or the availability of land to be open to all users, and making land more easily “accessible” in order to accommodate the greatest number of users often confuses and blurs the line over how land should be managed and for what purpose.

In the Adirondacks, wild lands also matter. The fact that some of these lands are more sensitive, pristine or remote is important...not just for the recreation that happens on them, but for the rich ecological purpose that these wild places play in our greater health, imagination and sense of identity. Wild places have always challenged us to adapt to their environments and to test ourselves against their physical, emotional and spiritual demands.

These challenges are core to the wild land experience, even more so when those lands are formally classified and managed as Primitive or Wilderness Areas. In these special areas, the experience is intricately linked to the lack of human intrusion and a sense of remoteness and wildness. The attempt to make these areas more accessible for the general public beyond the very specific and necessary accommodations for people with disabilities needs to be carefully balanced against the broader ecological and wilderness values that make them unique and worthy of protection.

APA Working Group

Modernizing forestry regulations

In late September, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) hosted the initial meeting of a working group focused on improving provisions within the current APA clear-cutting regulations. Representatives of the working group include APA and Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) staff, the timber industry, small acreage landowners, academics, and environmental advocates, including Council staff. The group is focused on finding improvements to the current regulations that will update the science and forestry standards to better reflect current and accepted best management practices for timber operations. Recommendations from this group will be presented in early 2015.

SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL



Above: Adirondack Council staff working hard to protect the Adirondacks while enjoying a beautiful fall day.

EarthShare New York

Workplace giving supports Adirondack conservation

Take advantage of an easy and convenient way to support the Adirondack Council! You can make a gift to the Council by payroll contributions through EarthShare New York's workplace giving program at numerous private companies, many state and municipal government organizations and in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), by selecting #22101 on your pledge form.



Contributions to EarthShare New York support a broad range of charities committed to protecting public health and our air, land, water, and wildlife. To find out more about how you and your workplace can support the Adirondack Council through an EarthShare of New York charitable giving campaign, visit their website at: earthsharenyc.org.

Thank you to Adirondack Council supporters who contribute through their EarthShare workplace giving campaigns. We appreciate your interest in protecting the Adirondack Park.

Shop Smart. Shop Local.

Holiday gifts support advocacy

Enjoy our selection of locally-made gifts that support small Adirondack businesses and help provide the resources needed to advocate for strong, sustainable Adirondack communities.

Also, if you shop online consider AmazonSmile, at smile.amazon.com, where .5% of your purchase will be donated to the charity of your choice. We hope you choose the Council!



Fuel your passion for the Adirondacks with these goodies and more found on our website: AdirondackCouncil.org



Clarence Petty Intern

Meet Greg Redling

Greg Redling was our Clarence Petty Intern based in our Elizabethtown office this past summer. He graduated from Paul Smith's College with a bachelor's degree in Natural Resources Management and Policy and a minor in GIS. Greg worked in our Conservation Program and assisted Rocci Aguirre, Conservation Director with drafting comment letters, attending public forums and tracking state agency decisions affecting Adirondack Forest Preserve lands. He also used his background in GIS to help update critical datasets and enhance our GIS mapping capabilities. Outside of the office Greg enjoys hiking, kayaking and singing.



The Council's internship program seeks to carry on the legacy of Adirondack conservation activist Clarence Petty (1904-2009).



Careers in Conservation

New fellowship established

Thanks to a generous contribution, the Council recently established the Eugene and Emily Grant Conservation Fellowship. This is an opportunity for an early-career environmental advocate and conservation science professional to expand her/his leadership skills and professional development by working closely with Rocci Aguirre, the Council's Director of Conservation. The Grant Fellowship offers exposure to the entire suite of environmental policy issues impacting the six-million-acre Adirondack Park, while focusing on the preservation of Wilderness.



Winter Road Maintenance Conference Held

Town of Brighton

In mid-September, the Adirondack Council, in partnership with AdkAction.org and Paul Smith's College, held the third conference focusing on winter road maintenance and the impacts from using road salt to clear roads. Recent research done by the Adirondack Watershed Institute supports past findings that sodium chloride, or road salt, is building up within the watersheds of the Adirondacks and contaminating ground water. The conference brought together more than 80 town, county and state leaders with environmental and research organizations to look at other options that could reduce the amount of road salt used on Adirondack roads. Outcomes from this conference included a proposed Road Salt Alternative Working Group that would examine ways for stakeholders to cooperatively work towards solutions to keep roads safe, while protecting waters from further contamination.

New Hiking Trail Dedicated

Town of Tupper Lake

Council staff joined state officials, trail volunteers, family, and friends for the dedication of the new Goodman Mountain trail named for slain civil rights activist Andrew Goodman. The trail just south of Tupper Lake is wheelchair accessible for a stretch and then climbs a gentle grade to an open rocky knoll.



Above: Group gathered on Goodman Mtn.
Photo courtesy of the Adirondack Park Agency

J & L Site Gets Cleaned-Up

Towns of Clifton and Fine

In June, the towns of Clifton and Fine and St. Lawrence County officials worked with the state to clean up pollution and reclaim the long-idled J & L industrial site.

Under the settlement, St. Lawrence County will take title to the property and will be relieved of any liability related to hazardous material contamination on the parcel. This will allow the property to be redeveloped for industrial or commercial use. The Council has long supported actions that would provide opportunities for the towns of Clifton and Fine to attract suitable economic activity that will benefit community residents.



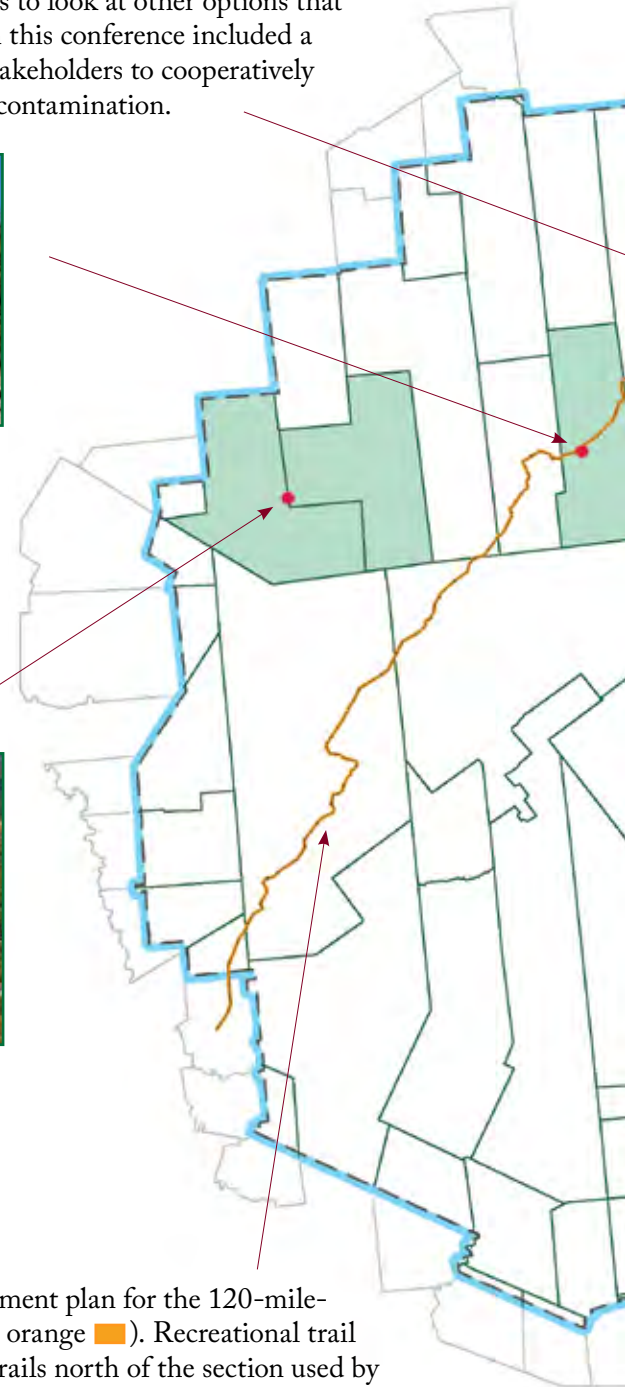
Above: The idle J & L industrial site and flooded open pit mine.
Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.

Rail Corridor's Future to be Determined

Remsen-Lake Placid

In July, New York State officials announced they would be updating the management plan for the 120-mile-long, Remsen-to-Lake Placid rail corridor, aka Adirondack Railroad (on map in orange ■). Recreational trail activists have for years called for an end to scenic rail use and for removal of the rails north of the section used by the Old Forge tourist train in favor of hiking, biking and snowmobiling. Train enthusiasts have advocated for trains and trails.

The Adirondack Council provided the state with a set of six principles to guide them when deciding the future use of the rail corridor. State officials have agreed to consider the Council's principles as they update the plan. The six principles are designed to protect the corridor, adjoining natural resources and Park communities. View the six principles on our website, under resources, or scan the QR code.



Turnout Shows Concern Over Oil Trains

Champlain Valley

In August, more than 120 concerned citizens attended a public forum in Plattsburgh to discuss the risks of crude oil train traffic through the Adirondack Park and Champlain Valley. The forum was organized and sponsored by the Adirondack Council, Adirondack Mountain Club, Center for Biological Diversity, and the Lake Champlain Committee. Currently, more than three-

million gallons per day of crude oil is transported through the eastern Adirondack Park from Canada to the Port of Albany on rail lines that run

through communities and mere feet from Lake Champlain (on map in red ■).

Those in attendance at the forum said they were dismayed by reports of disastrous spills and explosions in other areas of the nation and Canada. They urged state officials to fully assess the risks to communities and the environment here. The audience called on federal regulators to ban the older, leak-prone rail tanker cars involved in recent accidents and adopt policies that will expand the use of alternative energy.



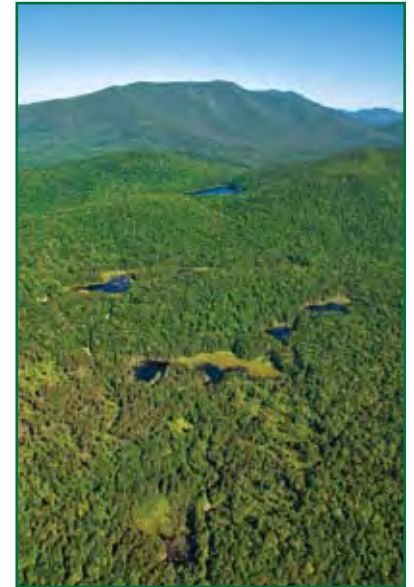
State Buys McIntyre West

Town of Newcomb

In mid-September, the state announced it had purchased the 5,770-acre McIntyre West tract, southwest of Henderson Lake in Essex County, from the Adirondack Nature Conservancy. The tract (on map in yellow ■) includes Mount Andrew (3,081 feet) and the 16-acre Lake Andrew. The purchase will improve access to the Santanoni Range and protect rivers, wetlands and high-elevation habitat, while creating new opportunities for hiking, paddling, backpacking, and camping.

The state is expected to purchase the nearby McIntyre East tract later this year. The Adirondack Council will urge the state to incorporate both tracts into the adjacent High Peaks Wilderness.

Above: McIntyre West Tract, Lake Andrew and the Santanoni Range.
Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.



New Invasives Found in Watersheds

Lake Champlain and Lake George

It was confirmed in September that the spiny water flea has arrived in Lake Champlain. This invasive is a zooplankton that threatens to disrupt the food chain and be a nuisance to anglers. Also, black swallow-wort has been found along the shoreline of Lake George. This invasive plant is a vine that grows tall and chokes out native plants and could threaten native butterfly habitat. The Council will continue to advocate for additional policies, education and resources to combat invasive species.



Spiny Water Flea

Black Swallow-wort



ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness

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Below: (L - R) Rocci Aguirre, Conservation Director and Kevin Chlad, Legislative Director; Jason Stoltz, Adirondack Council Board Member, Tyler Frakes, Membership Coordinator, and Kevin Chlad; Susan Hughes, Executive Assistant, with Otis Mountain Get Down music fans interested in clean water.



ADIRONDACK COUNCIL VALUES

The manner in which the Adirondack Council carries out our programs is as important as the programs themselves. Our values include a commitment to the mission and vision (pg. 2), and:

Highest Ethical Standards and Integrity: The Adirondack Council's Board of Directors and staff will at all times adhere to the highest ethical standards including honesty and integrity. We will always honor the trust placed in us by our donors, members, colleagues, and the public. We are non-partisan and accept no government funding.

Responsible Education and Constructive Advocacy: The Adirondack Council's initiatives in education and advocacy are thoughtful and based on the best science. We work proactively to produce results that matter to the residents, visitors and ecology of the Adirondack Park.

Partnerships and respect for all: The Adirondack Council works in collaboration with partners and seeks to listen and to understand the diverse opinions regarding a long-term vision for the Park. The Council seeks to build consensus and only stands alone when truly necessary. We respect the needs, values and traditions of the Park's communities. We strive to involve and inspire men and women of all ages with diverse social, economic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds.

Innovation and Excellence: The Adirondack Council embraces progressive new ideas and reasonable adaptability to attain our vision of the Adirondack Park. We pursue the value of excellence in all of our work with great attention to detail and thoughtful consideration of others.

Teamwork: The Adirondack Council Board of Directors and Staff will work cooperatively as a team based on informed decisions made by the group for the betterment of the organization and the Adirondack Park.

Commitment to the Future: The Adirondack Council is committed to protecting the natural environment of the Adirondack Park to preserve wild habitat in harmony with resilient human communities for generations to come.