

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

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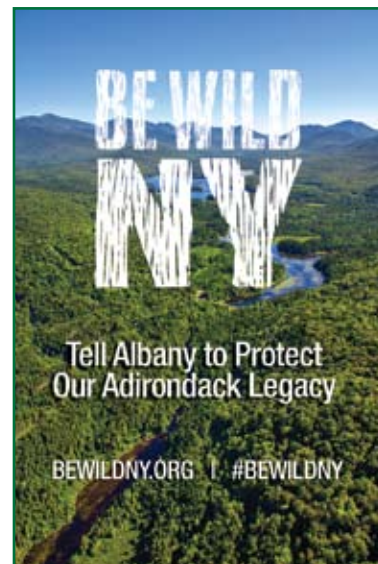
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## Wilderness Advocates Speak Up

State poised to make history

The Boreas Ponds tract (20,500 acres) is the final Finch/Nature Conservancy property of the 161,000-acre project to be purchased by the state. Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that the state expects to buy this last piece by the end of March 2016. If the majority of this parcel, the MacIntyre tracts, and the Casey Brook tract are designated as Wilderness and combined with existing wilderness areas nearby (High Peaks and Dix Mountain), the result will be a protected, motor-free area of over 280,000 acres. This would be the largest wilderness in the northeast.

If there was ever a landscape worthy of the Park's highest level of protection - motor-free Wilderness - this is it! That's why the Council is investing significant time and resources to amplify the public's support for wilderness. We are launching petitions, purchasing advertising, meeting with officials, working with other advocates and the media, and more. (See page 6 to learn how you can be part of the *BeWildNY* campaign to expand Adirondack wilderness.)



## Applause for Governor's Proposed Budget

Increased funding to protect and enhance the Adirondack Park

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's fiscal year 2016-17 budget proposal is positive for the Adirondacks.

"Thank you for reminding the world that there's no better place to vacation than New York State," said business owner Bob Rafferty in a quote featured in the Governor's State of the State message and budget presentation.

The Governor's proposed budget presents an historic opportunity for Adirondack Park stakeholders to protect wilderness and assist communities. With public outreach and education, the Council is building support for state legislative approval of record Adirondack funding.

The Council applauds the Governor's plan to nearly double the Environmental Protection Fund to \$300 million, which includes \$10 million to fight invasive species, and other funds to protect water, wildlife and people. The budget also includes funds for community smart growth projects and clean water grants. Local government leaders, business owners and conservation organizations all praised the budget plan publicly, indicating a continued interest and commitment by stakeholders to find common ground on behalf of the Park.



**THANK YOU FOR REMINDING THE WORLD  
THAT THERE'S NO BETTER PLACE TO  
VACATION THAN NEW YORK STATE.**

~ Bob Rafferty, Adirondac Rafting Co.

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Newsletter photos by Adirondack Council staff  
unless otherwise noted.



*Conservation field work selfie from Executive Director Willie Janeway.*

## It's Time to Make History

### Protecting our Adirondack forests and waters

With your generous support, the Adirondack Council is strong and growing. This is fortunate because in 2016 we face a once in a generation opportunity to protect for posterity the Boreas Ponds and 35,000 acres of forests and waters and to expand the Adirondack High Peaks Wilderness Area.

Unfortunately, there will also be increased threats. Daily we see pressure to expand motorized and mechanized recreation on "Forever Wild" state lands, to clear-cut private forests and to weaken laws written to protect the Park. Decisions are hyper-political, rather than based in law and science.

Our legacy as the government watchdog for the six-million-acre Adirondack Park is about to be defined. Securing an historic victory for Adirondack wilderness and communities will require new levels of investment in research and science-based education, coalition building and advocacy. It will also require new levels of cooperation and leadership.

But, when the former Supervisor of the Town of Newcomb George Canon applauds land acquisition, and the Adirondack Council applauds funds for Hamlet revitalization, we know the Park is poised for change. With your continued support, we will make sure this change is good for the Adirondacks.

As you read our newsletter, you will see that we have had many successes over the past few months. These include state acquisition of land, record funding for the environment, investments in communities, expanding protections against invasive species, and new pledges to fight climate change. We will build on these successes in the coming year.

The Adirondack Park is a globally recognized, national treasure with the power to energize body and spirit for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. The Park helps our economy and provides irreplaceable clean water and a home for people and wildlife.

In 2016, we have a rare opportunity to make the world a better place and secure permanent, improved protections for the Adirondacks. By working with our partners and with your continued support, we can make Wilderness and history.

Thank You,

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



Above: Kevin Chlad, Director of Government Relations, provides budget testimony before state legislators in support of Adirondack wilderness and communities.

### Historic Environmental Funding Proposed

Many benefits for the Adirondacks

Released in January, Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s fiscal year 2016-17 budget proposal includes record funding for clean water, wilderness, wildlife, and communities in the Adirondack Park. The Governor’s budget calls for a \$300 million **Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)**, an increase of \$123 million, fully funding the EPF for the first time. Praised by local government officials and conservationists, the budget presents an historic opportunity for stakeholders to work together to protect and enhance the Park’s natural resources and communities.

The towns of Newcomb, Indian Lake and Minerva will receive \$660,000 in EPF waterfront revitalization grants. Essex County will receive \$300,000 and Hamilton County \$150,000 in grants aimed at landfill closure/capping costs and landfill gas management. Another \$500,000 is set aside in a separate account for pre-closure and post-closure costs of Adirondack landfills in an agreement with Essex County.

#### EPF CATEGORIES IMPORTANT TO THE ADIRONDACKS



### Clean Water Funding

Helping Adirondack communities

Two Adirondack communities will receive grants from the NYS Water Infrastructure Improvement Act created in 2015. As one of the Adirondack Council’s priorities last year, this new funding source is designed to help communities pay for their drinking water or wastewater projects. The Village of Saranac Lake will receive \$1.75 million to help fund a sewer project that will support business and better protect the Saranac River. The Town of Willsboro will receive \$750,000 to help fund repairs to its wastewater treatment plant.

### Staffing & Policy Reforms Needed

More budget details

While the Governor’s budget contained historic funding for the environment, several funding proposals have drawn concern while important policy initiatives were left on the table. For a second year, the Executive Budget proposes taking \$38 million in proceeds from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative carbon auctions slated for environmental projects and diverting it into the general fund. Additionally, the Adirondack Park Agency and the Department of Environmental Conservation staffing levels remain flat. Reforms concerning all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use and Real Property Tax Law 480/480(a) conservation incentives were also left unaddressed. The Council will continue to push for these important measures.

Thank you to members who contacted their NYS legislators and advocated for increased environmental funding in the fiscal year 2016-17 state budget!



### Great South Woods

#### Wildlands and recreation planning

The State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Conservation, held three public hearings in November to discuss findings from their 2015 outreach on recreational planning needs within the Great South Woods region (southwestern Adirondacks) of the Park. The Council was greatly encouraged by the preliminary findings and the subtle emphasis on a “recreational complex plan” without excluding ecosystem protection. ESF staff focused on realistic trail connections and incorporated ecosystems based management principles and ecosystem stewardship in trail siting. A draft report is expected in March.

### Adirondack Farms

#### Farm and food advocates meet

In November 2015, the Council hosted a meeting with the Commissioner of the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and approximately 30 local Adirondack/North Country farmers and food advocates. Key issues discussed included funding and grants, access to capital and credit in the region, regulations and policies, and the branding/marketing of Adirondack agriculture. Also discussed was the Council’s proposed micro-grant program to support agricultural practices in the Park, that decrease farming’s carbon footprint, help protect water and wildlife, support conservation values, and benefit communities.



*Above: (L-R) Commissioner Richard Ball and Essex Farm Institute Executive Director Michele Drozd.*

### Supreme Court Delays Clean Power Plan

#### Climate now in hands of next president

In February, a divided (5-4) U.S. Supreme Court issued an injunction to delay the implementation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Clean Power Plan. The Plan is designed to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and require states to develop their own emission reduction plans and interim goals by 2018.

The Plan must now wait until after a legal challenge brought by coal producers in a lower court, as well as an expected appeal to the Supreme Court. The appeal will most likely not happen until after the presidential election in November. Thus, the next president will decide whether the EPA continues to defend and implement the Plan.

However, a week after the Supreme Court issued the injunction, one member of the 5-4 majority, Justice Antonin Scalia, passed away adding to the uncertain future of the Clean Power Plan. The Council will continue to work with partners in support of the EPA’s authority to reduce upwind emissions that cause acid rain and climate change.

### Defending the Adirondacks

#### Responding to illegal motorized use of Forest Preserve lands

While the Adirondack Council strives to work with state and local officials, there are times when attorneys are hired to assist in defending the Adirondack Park. Some recent examples:

The Council is seeking NYS Department of Environmental Conservation compliance with the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act in response to a state decision to authorize new public motorized recreation across the Hudson River. The Council, with the Adirondack Mountain Club, hired Albany firm Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna to argue our case.

The Town of Forestport, Oneida County, expanded all-terrain vehicle (ATV) riding in the Adirondack Park in violation of state law. This endangers Forest Preserve lands. The Council hired the Watertown firm Conboy, McKay, Bachman & Kendall to prevent this illegal expansion of ATV riding.

The Council hired the Albany firm of Young/Sommer to defend the state’s right to keep closed abandoned town roads on Forest Preserve. In the most recent phase of the case involving the Jackrabbit Trail between Keene and Lake Placid, the state is being sued to open an abandoned road in the Sentinel Range Wilderness Area to motorized vehicles.



*A damaged Forest Preserve trail due to ATV trespass.*



## Advocacy in Action

### Voices for Adirondack protection

Throughout the year, the Council submits comment letters to state agencies on important issues that affect the water, wilderness, wildlife, and communities of the Adirondacks. Through the public comment process, the Council helps shape Adirondack Park policy. When your comments will make a difference, we urge you to write a letter too. Recent comment letters have addressed policy involving:

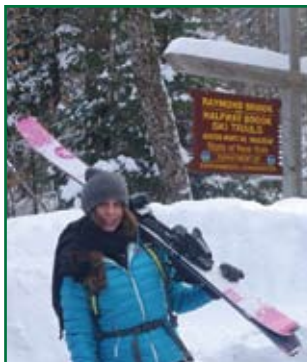
**Wilmington Wild Forest** - The Council supported proposed amendments by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to the Wilmington Wild Forest Unit Management Plan that would allow for **additional mountain bike trails** to be built. This area is appropriate for expanded mountain biking recreation.

**Ski Touring** - The Council was generally supportive in our comments to the DEC and Adirondack Park Agency (APA) on proposed **new standards for backcountry ski trails** in the Forest Preserve. The Council noted some definitions need to be clarified and technical issues resolved. The APA agreed to take more time to finalize this document.

**State Land Master Plan Amendments** - The Council provided comments to the APA on the **amendments to the State Land Master Plan** that supported designation of the Essex Chain Lakes as a motor-free Primitive Area. We also supported the use of mountain bikes on roads in this area and the use of non-natural materials to build a bridge over the Cedar River. But, we urged that the use of non-natural materials be on a case-by-case basis for bridges in Wild Forest areas. The Council strongly opposed a plan to allow mountain biking in all Primitive areas and the use of motorized vehicles and equipment to maintain those roads. These amendments to the Master Plan are scheduled to be considered by the APA at the March meeting.

The aforementioned public comment letters and others regarding **Primitive Tent Site Guidance** and the **Remsen Lake Placid Travel Corridor** (ie. rail-trail) can also be found online at [AdirondackCouncil.org](http://AdirondackCouncil.org) under Resources.

*Above: The Great Range. Photo courtesy of Miyoko Fulleringer.*



## See the Forest for the Trees

### New Council forestry principles

In February, the Council's Board of Directors approved a set of principles to guide the organization's positions on forestry within the Adirondacks. The Council supports working forests and recognizes the importance of forestry within our communities. A sustainable approach to forestry is needed to both protect the natural resources and provide for economic vitality. Helping to find incentives that support sustainable forestry and provide tools for land managers is at the heart of these new principles.

These forestry principles will provide a framework for addressing issues such as clearcutting, regional forest health, biomass, invasive species, sustainable forestry certifications, aesthetic impacts, and economic development.

View the Council's forestry principles online at [AdirondackCouncil.org](http://AdirondackCouncil.org) under Resources.



## Update on Crude Oil Trains

### Multi-state collaboration on preparedness

Efforts to address the potential catastrophic impacts associated with the transport of crude oil by rail through the Champlain Valley are picking up steam. Council staff participated in joint meetings of the Lake Champlain Citizen Advisory Committees which include people from New York and Vermont. These meetings engaged state and federal agencies in discussions regarding first-responder planning, funding for emergency efforts and post-response mitigation planning. The Council is working to expand these efforts through a coalition of non-profit organizations looking at state-wide impacts and broader climate change implications associated with fossil fuels.

## BE WILD NEW YORK!



**ADIRONDACK ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS ARE RIGHT: LATEST LAND ACQUISITION SHOULD BE ADDED TO WILDERNESS AREA....NEW YORK IS WILD – MUCH WILDER THAN MANY PEOPLE KNOW – BUT THE CAMPAIGN TO DESIGNATE THIS LAND AS WILDERNESS SHOULD HELP TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE SPECIAL NATURE OF THE ADIRONDACKS.**

~ Editorial, The Post Star, Glens Falls, Sunday, November 15, 2015

## Council Wants You to Be Wild

Collaborate, participate – celebrate!

There are strong differences of opinion about what the Boreas Ponds and other new Forest Preserve lands and waters should look and feel like when opened to the public. The Council, the Adirondack Mountain Club, and six other regional, state and national organizations recently launched the *BeWildNY* campaign, a collaborative effort to secure motor-free Wilderness protection for 35,000 acres of new public lands and expand the High Peaks Wilderness.

We know there are millions of people who appreciate that the Adirondack Park is a unique national treasure worth protecting. It is a critical time for you to be actively involved. Visit the [BeWildNewYork.org](http://BeWildNewYork.org) website and **sign the wilderness petition** (also on the enclosed envelope). Be sure we have your email address so we can quickly and inexpensively let you know when your signature, letter or attendance at public hearings will make a difference. Use social media to spread the word. Together we can make Wilderness!

**BE WILD  
NY**

## Assessing the Characteristics of Boreas Ponds

Science should determine land classification

Land classification is one of the most critical roles performed by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) when new lands come into the “forever wild” Forest Preserve. Determining the lands’ ability to withstand use and understanding the full range of natural resource considerations that these new lands present is of critical importance.

The acquisition of the Boreas Ponds tract will be one of the most important additions to the public lands within the Adirondacks in decades. This area of land located on the southern side of the High Peaks Wilderness Area has long been recognized as the crown jewel of the former Finch Pruyn lands. It is one of the most spectacular settings in the Park.

In his new report, *Boreas Ponds: Scientific assessment of physical, biological and intangible characteristics*, Dr. Ezra Schwartzberg has assessed the Boreas Ponds tract within the context of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. He explains the role these attributes play in the classification of new Forest Preserve lands. Using publicly obtained data, Dr. Schwartzberg has identified the overriding importance of these lands in terms of their ecological integrity and wild character, and has further captured key factors that may constrain recreational use on these lands.

Dr. Schwartzberg has identified a number of key natural resource issues that should be considered as components of the classification process:

- The Boreas Ponds tract contains several **“fragile areas”** including boreal (spruce-fir) forests, sub-alpine zones and wetlands that include large peat land.
- Over 68 percent of the Boreas Ponds tract soils are rated **“poorly suited” for specific roads.**
- Existing roads have a high likelihood to **disrupt the travel corridors of various animal species** such as bear, bobcat, and fishers.
- The bay-breasted warbler and northern bog aster, **two “imperiled” species**, have been documented.
- The Boreas Ponds landscape, terrain and physical attributes convey **wilderness characteristics.**
- Seasonal motorized recreation would **diminish the wilderness characteristics.**



Above: Boreas Ponds and the High Peaks Wilderness.  
Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.

## SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL

### Volunteer Spotlight

Celebrating today's Adirondack advocates



Alyson Schultz has been a dynamic volunteer for the Council who humbly avoids the limelight, but works tirelessly with an energy that draws people together in common support for the Adirondack Park.

For Alyson, the Adirondack Park is where she made most of her life's greatest memories -- where she met her husband, got engaged, married, and where her family celebrates every holiday. "It's our family's absolute favorite place in the world," she

says. Alyson and her husband Douglas now volunteer and support the Adirondack Council because they agree with the Council's balanced and even-handed approach and are aligned with its core principles. "There must be a strong advocate for preservation of the Park -- making sure development occurs intelligently and we preserve wilderness so future generations can enjoy the same experiences we do today...While preserving the wilderness areas of the Park is paramount to our family, we feel it is equally important to foster an environment where Adirondackers who live in the Park year-round have opportunities to find stimulating and creative careers."

Along with Christina Maloney, Alyson co-chairs the ADKnyc group of younger Adirondack Council members. The idea formed naturally a few years ago, when staff member Julie Ball and Council member Justin Potter began organizing gatherings in NYC. This evolving group now meets regularly at interesting venues throughout the city, having developed fast friendships through their shared passion for the Park. Thank you Alyson!

Right: (L-R) Sen. Brad M. Hoylman & Willie Janeway.

Right: Diane Fish & ADKnyc group members.



Left: (L-R) Ashley Stone & Jonathan Carmel.

Left: (L-R) Chris Berry, Christina Maloney & Georgina Cullman.

Above: (L-R) David Bronston & Sherry Nemmers.



Above: Adirondack Council Reception in NYC, February 2016, recognizing and honoring guest speaker Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul - (L-R) Lee Keet (host), Hon. Kathy Hochul, Nancy Keet (host). Additional reception and ADKnyc gathering photos below.

### Clarence Petty Intern

#### Meet Dana Mancini

Dana Mancini is the 2016 Clarence Petty Intern working in the Council's Albany office. She is a 2015 graduate of the SUNY School of Environmental Science and Forestry and is currently a graduate student at Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy where she is pursuing a Master of Public Administration. Dana drafts and distributes legislative bill memos, tracks legislation, attends legislative committee meetings, and assists Council staff. In her spare time, Dana likes to travel, spend time with her family and bake.



The Council's internship program seeks to carry on the legacy of beloved Adirondack conservation activist Clarence Petty (1904-2009) by training and inspiring the next generation of conservation leaders.

Above: (L-R) Assembly Environmental Conservation Chair Steve Englebright and Clarence Petty Intern Dana Mancini.

Email is the most efficient and cost-effective way for us to keep you informed of issues facing the Adirondack Park and help you connect with government officials when your voice will make a positive difference.



Sign up or update your email address at [AdirondackCouncil.org](http://AdirondackCouncil.org). Thank You!



## ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

*Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness*

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## Forever Wild Day and Common Ground Alliance

Save the dates: July 9 & July 19

Celebrate Adirondack Park conservation in Northville, NY on Saturday, July 9 at the Inn at the Bridge.

Please join us for our annual members' meeting, lunch and Conservationist of the Year award at Forever Wild Day.



The 10th Annual Common Ground Alliance Forum will be on Tuesday,

**July 19 at The View arts center in Old Forge, NY.**

Join community leaders, local officials and nonprofits working together to promote and discuss issues facing the Adirondacks.



## Become a Park Ambassador!

Participate in a new program

As an Adirondack Council member you have a variety of opportunities to make an impact in your community and the Adirondack Park. Are you interested in getting more involved? Ask about our Ambassador Program! Council Ambassadors are passionate individuals who engage public officials and promote the Council's message and priorities. From giving testimony at public hearings, to hosting member gatherings, there are many ways to get involved.

For more information contact Greg Redling, Advocacy/ Outreach Assistant, at 1.800.842.7275 or [gredling@adirondackcouncil.org](mailto:gredling@adirondackcouncil.org).



*Left: (L - R) Executive Director Willie Janeway Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton (D-Ithaca) and Adirondack Council Ambassador Sue Suwinski enjoy conversation about the Adirondack Park.*

**MEETING FACE-TO-FACE WITH MY STATE SENATOR, THE HONORABLE HUGH FARLEY, HELPED ME BETTER UNDERSTAND THE SENATOR'S VIEWS WITH RESPECT TO THE PARK. OUR DISCUSSION WAS WIDE-RANGING, BUT WITH ADDED EMPHASIS ON THE BOREAS POND TRACT ACQUISITION...SPECIFICALLY, THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENSURE ITS PROTECTION BY ADDING IT TO THE HIGH PEAKS WILDERNESS AREA. OUR MEETING WAS A PLEASANT AND PRODUCTIVE EXPERIENCE.** ~ Dennis Sullivan, Adirondack Council Ambassador