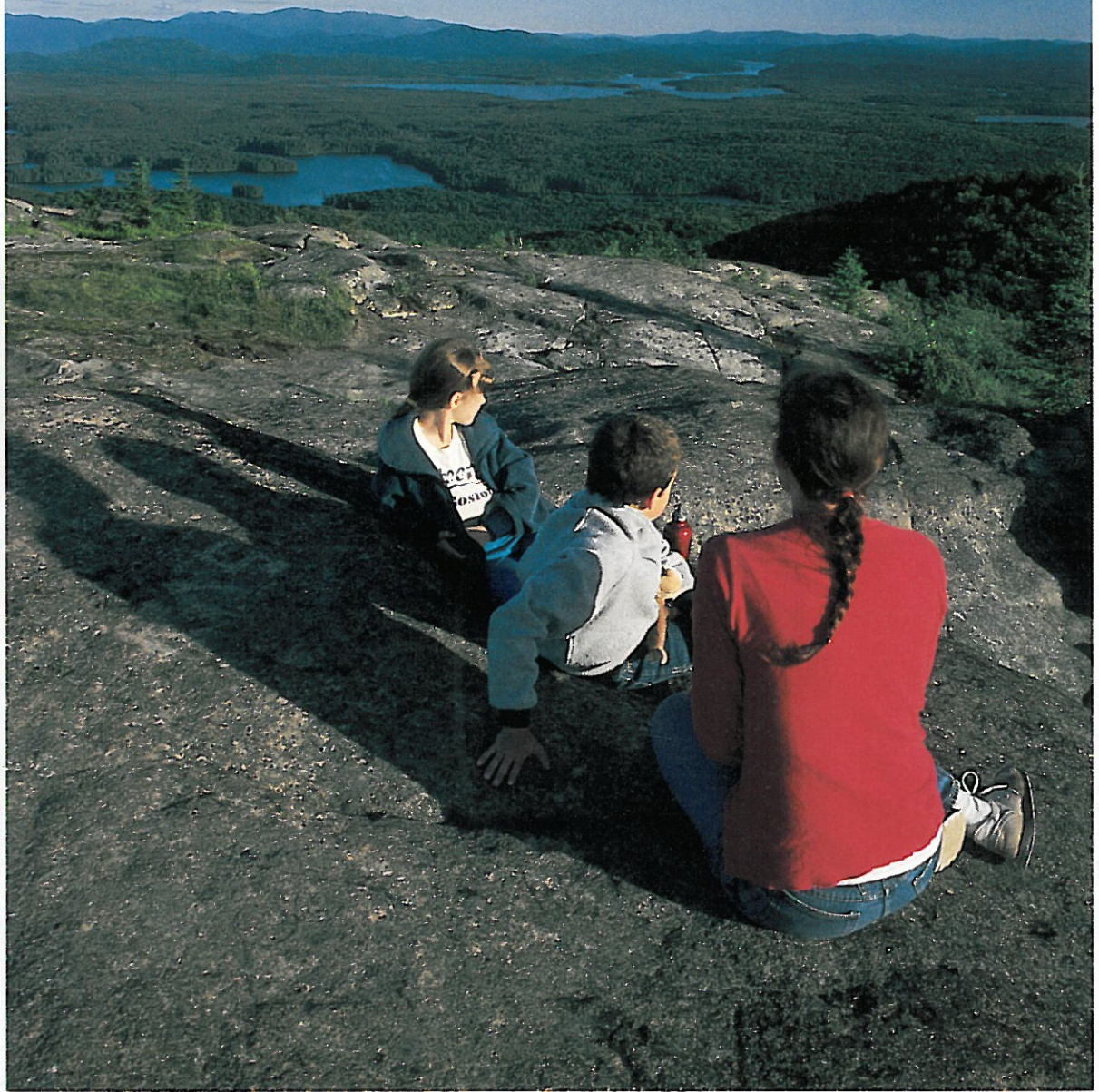


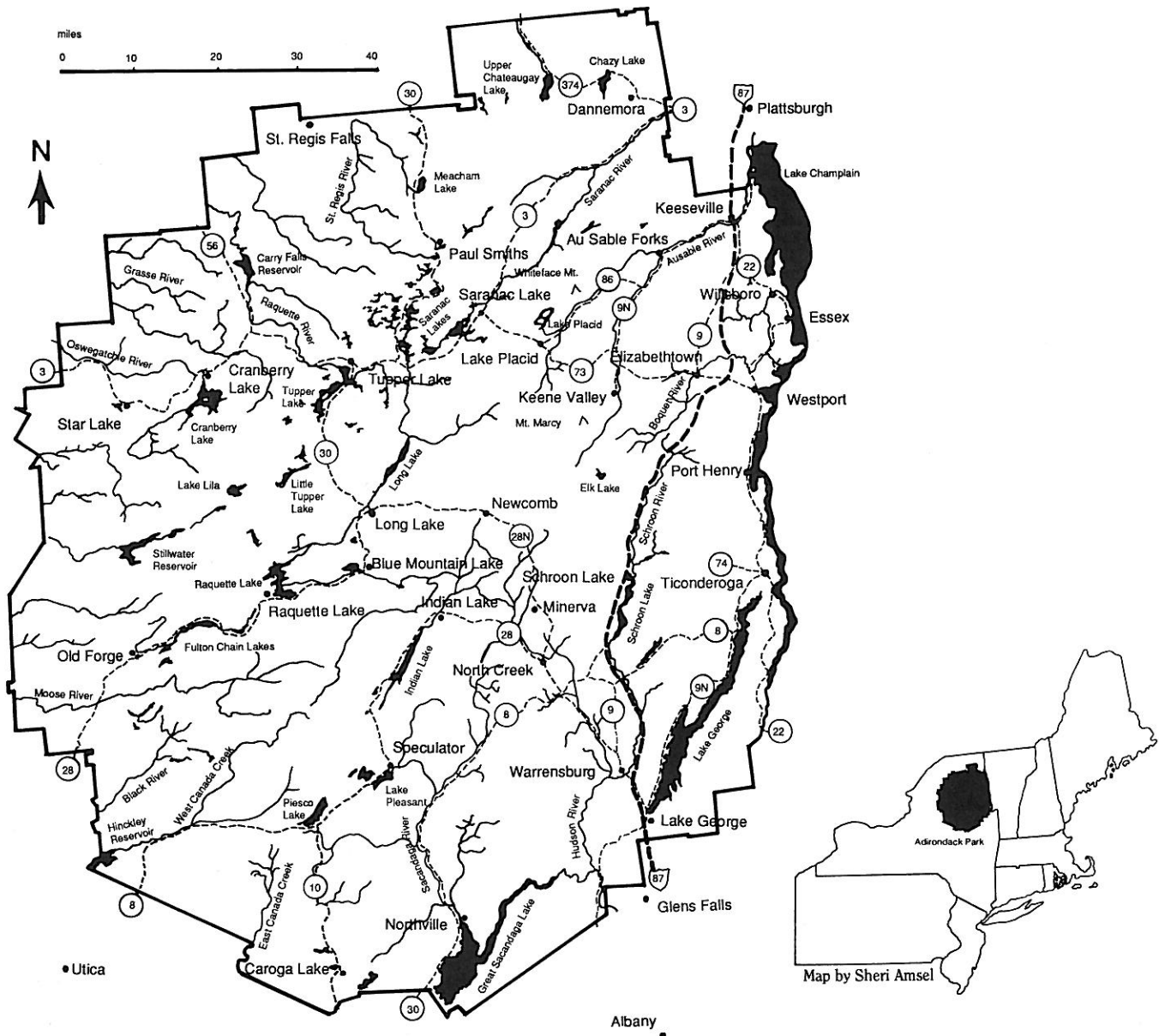
2020 VISION

FULFILLING THE PROMISE OF THE ADIRONDACK PARK



The Adirondack Council

THE ADIRONDACK PARK



The Adirondack Park is the largest public park in the contiguous United States. It contains six million acres, covers one-fifth of New York State, and is equal in size to neighboring Vermont. Few people realize that the Adirondack Park is nearly three times the size of Yellowstone National Park.

Some 58 percent of the Adirondack Park is private land, devoted principally to forestry, agriculture and open-space recreation. The Park is home for 130,000 permanent and 210,000 seasonal residents, and hosts an estimated nine million visitors annually.

The remaining 42 percent of the Adirondack Park is publicly-owned Forest Preserve, protected as "forever wild" by the State constitution since 1895. One million acres of these public lands, representing one-sixth of the entire Park, are designated as Wilderness, where a wide range of non-motorized recreation may be enjoyed in an incomparable, natural setting. The majority of public land—more than 1.3 million acres—is classified as Wild Forest, where motorized uses are permitted on designated waters, roads and trails.

Plants and wildlife abound in the Adirondack Park, many of them found nowhere else in New York State. Uncut ancient forests cover tens of thousands of acres of public land. Ironically, much of the Park is more wild and natural today than a century ago, when irresponsible logging practices and forest fires ravaged much of the yet-unprotected Adirondack region. Someday, all native wildlife, including those extirpated in the last century, such as the wolf,

cougar, lynx and moose, may live and breed here.

The western and southern Adirondacks are a gentle landscape of hills, lakes, ponds and streams. In the northeast are the High Peaks, 46 of them above 4,000 feet, 11 with alpine summits that rise above timberline.

The Adirondacks include the headwaters of five major drainage basins: Lake Champlain and the Hudson, Black, St. Lawrence and Mohawk rivers. Within the Park are 2,800 lakes and ponds and more than 1,500 miles of rivers fed by an estimated 30,000 miles of brooks and streams.

Embodied in this and other Adirondack Council studies is a vision of an Adirondack Park that will serve as a global model for integrated land use and conservation. In the next century and beyond, the Adirondack Park must continue to offer vast areas of undisturbed open space, a sanctuary for native plant and animal species, and a natural haven for human beings in need of spiritual and physical refreshment. It must also provide for sustainable, resource-based local economies and for the protection of community character and countryside values.

This publication is but one step in the Park protection process. Through continuing public education and advocacy for the protection of the Adirondack Park's natural character, the Adirondack Council hopes to advise public and private policy-makers on ways to safeguard this last remaining great expanse of open space in the eastern United States.

2020 VISION

A SUMMARY OF THE THREE-VOLUME SERIES

**PRODUCED IN CELEBRATION
OF THE CENTENNIAL
OF THE ADIRONDACK PARK
1992**

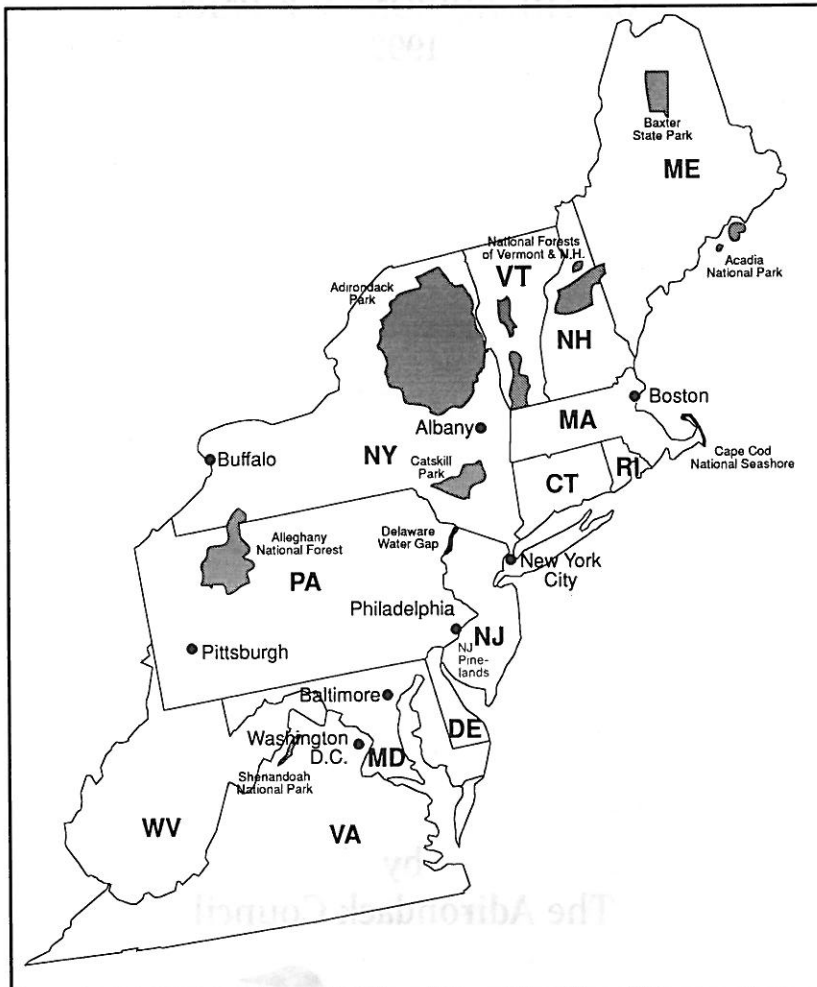
by
The Adirondack Council



Table of Contents

	Page
About the 2020 VISION Series	3
Introduction.....	4
Volume One: Biological Diversity.....	5
Volume Two: Completing the Adirondack Wilderness System	16
Volume Three: Realizing the Recreational Potential of Adirondack Wild Forests	31
The Adirondack Council	Inside Back Cover

A Sanctuary Worth Preserving



Located within a day's drive of 71 million people, the Adirondack Park is the largest remaining natural area in the northeast.

About the 2020 VISION Series

The three-volume 2020 Vision series is designed as a plan for fulfilling the dream of creating a true Adirondack Park. It would ensure the preservation and ecological integrity of the Adirondack Park for the year 2020 and beyond. The following pages summarize each of the published volumes in the 2020 series and present samples of the maps, photographs and descriptions that

comprise the more detailed technical reports.

A limited number of technical reports remain on our shelves, and may be ordered from the Adirondack Council, Box D-2, Elizabethtown, New York, 12932. To cover production and mailing costs, a donation of \$10 per copy of any technical volume is requested.

VOLUME ONE

Biological Diversity: Saving All the Pieces

A 64-page explanation of the most extensive biological survey ever undertaken on the 3.5 million acres of privately-owned land in the Park. Over 218,000 acres of great biological value in need of permanent protection

are identified. Also calls for studies on the feasibility of restoring healthy populations of such former Adirondack residents as the wolf and the moose.

VOLUME TWO

Completing the Adirondack Wilderness System

A 48-page report intended to serve as a policy-maker's guide for completing the protection of one of the nation's greatest public assets—the more than one million acres of lands and waters of the Adirondack Forest Pre-

serve designated as Wilderness. Includes mapping and descriptions of critical public and private lands and waters that are recommended for eventual inclusion in the state wilderness system.

VOLUME THREE

Realizing the Recreational Potential of Adirondack Wild Forests

A 52-page report mapping and describing the wild forests of the Adirondack Park and recommending how many of these scattered, state-owned parcels can be connected,

protected, enhanced, and managed to achieve their full recreational potential for a wide variety of users.

Acknowledgements

These three volumes of research were made possible by the generous support of the **W. Alton Jones Foundation, Inc.** (Volume One); **The Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation, Inc.** (Volume Two) and **Mrs. Joan McAlpin** (Volume Three), as well as the generosity of those who made contributions to the CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE ADIRONDACK PARK.

Volumes One and Two were written by George D. Davis. Volume Three was written by Barbara McMartin. This publication edited by John F. Sheehan. Cover photo by Carl E. Heilman, II.

Introduction

On May 10, 1992, the people of the State of New York will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the creation of the Adirondack Park. A national treasure, the Adirondack Park is a unique combination of public and private lands; a diverse patchwork of six million acres of landscape protected for one hundred years by New Yorkers who had the vision and commitment to create and maintain this incredible natural legacy to future generations.

The 2020 Vision series is a blueprint, a guide for New Yorkers who seek to maintain and improve what has been left to us for safekeeping. This document is a summary of three reports that outline the vision of the Adirondack Council for future protection of the critical biological and recreational resources of the Park.

The 2020 Vision series identifies tens of thousands of acres of public and private lands that are vital to the long-term protection and enhancement of the Adirondack Park. The ownership of the parcels is diverse, ranging from large corporate ownerships to sporting clubs and private homesteads. Thousands of acres are on the market now, others may never change hands. The 2020 Vision series identifies the unique characteristics of these lands and the need to ensure their protection into and beyond the Twenty-first Century.

The State of New York need not buy all the land it needs to protect. Many thousands of acres in private hands are carefully tended by good stewards of the land, in some cases for generations of the same family. If the fate of these lands is not threatened and land-use remains essentially unchanged, there is little point in spending state funds to purchase them.

The lands identified in the 2020 series should, however, be priority sites for protection when the opportunity or the need arises. Acquisition should be made on a willing-seller/willing-buyer basis, with all payments based on the current fair market value of the land. Competing demands for public dollars may mean that the public purchase of some important tracts in this study may not be feasible until well into the next century.

In such cases, other preservation techniques must suffice. The use of conservation easements, which restrict future development with the consent of the present owner is a cost-effective tool for protecting open space. It also allows the landowner to benefit from state tax-sharing on the easement lands.

Only in the most extreme cases, where critical, irreplaceable resources are threatened with imminent loss or degradation should the State even consider using its power of eminent domain. Eminent domain should never be used where a conservation easement adequately protects the resources involved. Current laws already require that eminent domain be used only after

all other avenues for protecting land have been explored and exhausted.

The goal of the 2020 Vision series is simple: to secure a wild, naturally diverse, permanently protected Adirondack Park for the year 2020 and beyond.

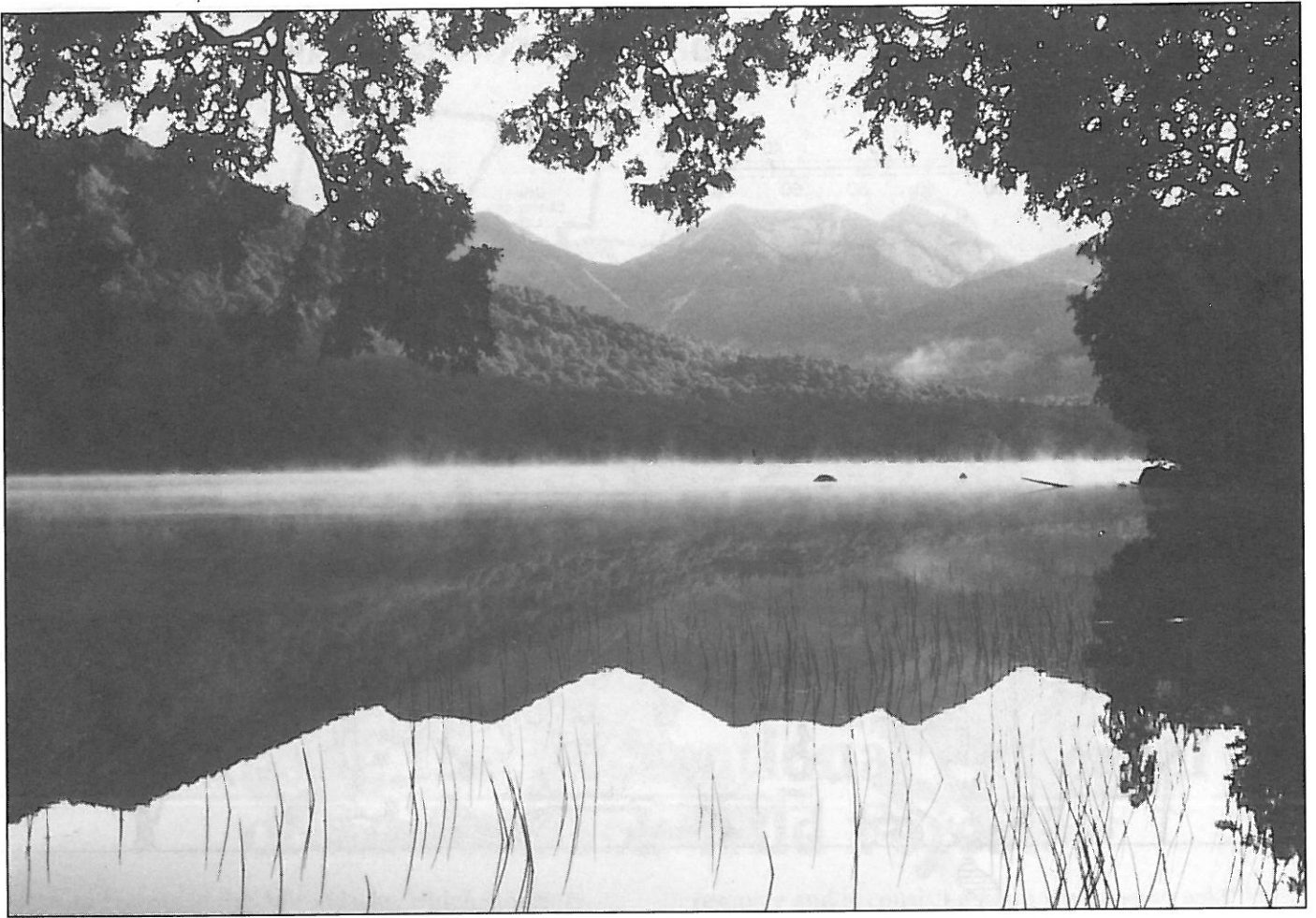
The people of the State of New York still have the opportunity to secure the finest wilderness legacy east of the Mississippi; to restore the moose and other native species to the Park; to protect for all time the biological diversity of these lands and to secure the future of sustainable natural resource-based economies such as agriculture and the forest products industry.

We invite all New Yorkers to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the Adirondack Park by joining together to ensure the future of this global treasure through the year 2020, and beyond May 10, 2092 — when, we hope, our descendants will celebrate the Park's Bicentennial. May they find that we have done our jobs well and that the Adirondack Park is as wild and beautiful as it is today.

SPECIAL NOTE

It is important to note that some of the lands identified as "**Critical Private Lands**" in the maps and text of this publication are already protected from degradation by conservation easements and other tools which allow these private landowners to continue their century-long history of stewardship of Adirondack Park lands. They are included in the maps for the purpose of illustrating which lands are critical to the ecological and recreational needs of the Park. As stated above, lands adequately protected by such agreements need never be acquired in fee by the State of New York unless the owner so wishes.

Examples of lands whose owners have made agreements with the state and with private land trusts/conservancies never to develop their lands (through conservation easement contracts) include: the Adams Farm, Alderbrook Park, the Ausable Club, Bay Pond Park, the Big Simons Pond tract, Brandon Park, Camp Bedford, the Cold Brook tract, Deer Island, the Elk Lake preserve, the Headlands, the Hudson Headwaters tract, Jones Point, the Kreider tract, the Lassiter holdings (formerly Diamond International), Little Falls Farms, Lyons Falls Pulp & Paper Co. holdings, Ne-Ha-Sa-Ne, the Oswegatchie-Fine tract, Otterbrook Park, Paul Smiths College, Spring Pond Bog, the Streeter Pond tract, the Upper St. Regis tract, Utowana Lake/Eagle Lake/Minnow Pond tracts and the Yorkshire Timber Co. tract.



VOLUME ONE: Biological Diversity

The Council has identified 218,420 acres as outstanding biological treasures that cry out for lasting protection. As the crucial next step, the Council is urging the State to preserve more than half this acreage in a new Boreal Heritage Reserve — a magnificent legacy of lasting benefit to human beings, moose, spruce grouse, rare woodpeckers, quaking bogs, insect-eating pitcher plants, tamarack/spruce swamps, and a wondrous variety of other living things.

The Council also calls for the creation of a Champlain Valley Reserve, a 20,000-acre oasis of scenic woods, mountains, hills, lakeshores and farmlands that will be every bit as beautiful and “unimproved” in the year 2020 as it is today.

The remaining 74,000 acres covers 46 superb natural sites throughout the park, all of them threatened to some degree and all in need of permanent protection.

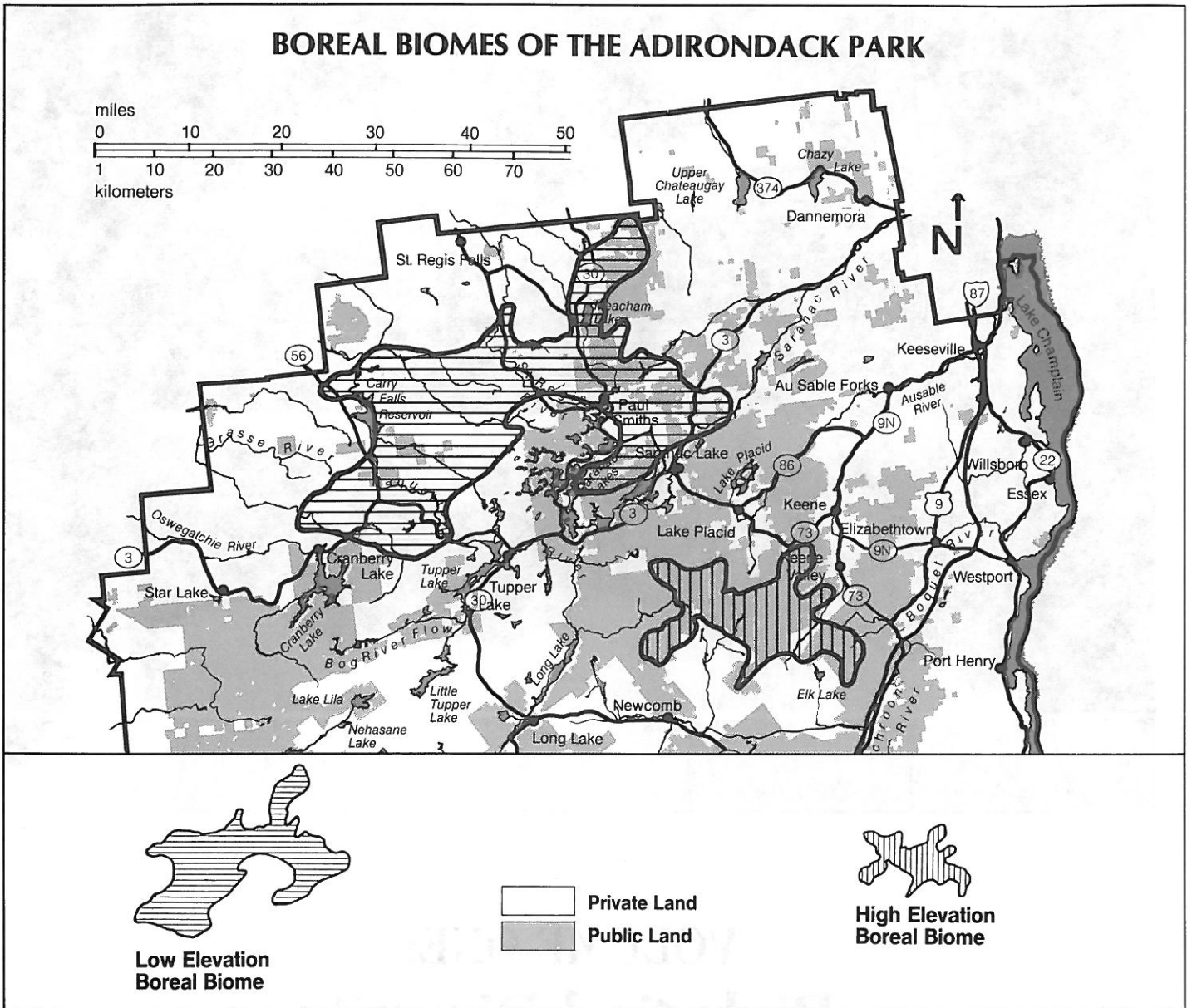
The Council makes specific recommendations on how this protection can be achieved. One means is State pur-

chase, another involves conservation easements. State purchase incorporates private land into the “forever wild” Forest Preserve; conservation easements involve State purchase of development rights on a particular tract. Under such easements, the land remains in private hands, open-space uses like forestry and farming may continue, but any kind of disruptive development is precluded.

The Council also calls for studies on the feasibility of restoring healthy populations of such former Adirondack residents as the timber wolf and the moose. Maybe it’s possible, maybe it isn’t — but the Council believes that *no restoration opportunity should be overlooked*.

George D. Davis prepared Volume I for the Council. An ecologist, land-use planner and distinguished Adirondack conservationist, Davis is currently identifying desirable additions to the Wilderness and Wild Forest categories of the public Forest Preserve. The Council will publish these findings next spring in Volume II.

BOREAL BIOMES OF THE ADIRONDACK PARK



WILD LEGACY ENVISIONED

Council Proposes Boreal Heritage Reserve

Boreal means northern — from Boreas, the mythological Greek god of the north wind. A biome is a regional community of living things. The words together describe a biological community that is common in northern Canada but almost non-existent in New York State except for portions of the Adirondack Park.

The boreal biome consists of spruces, firs and tamaracks, acidic bogs with cotton grass, insect-eating pitcher plants, the unwary (and rare) spruce grouse, and maybe, once again, the long-gone moose.

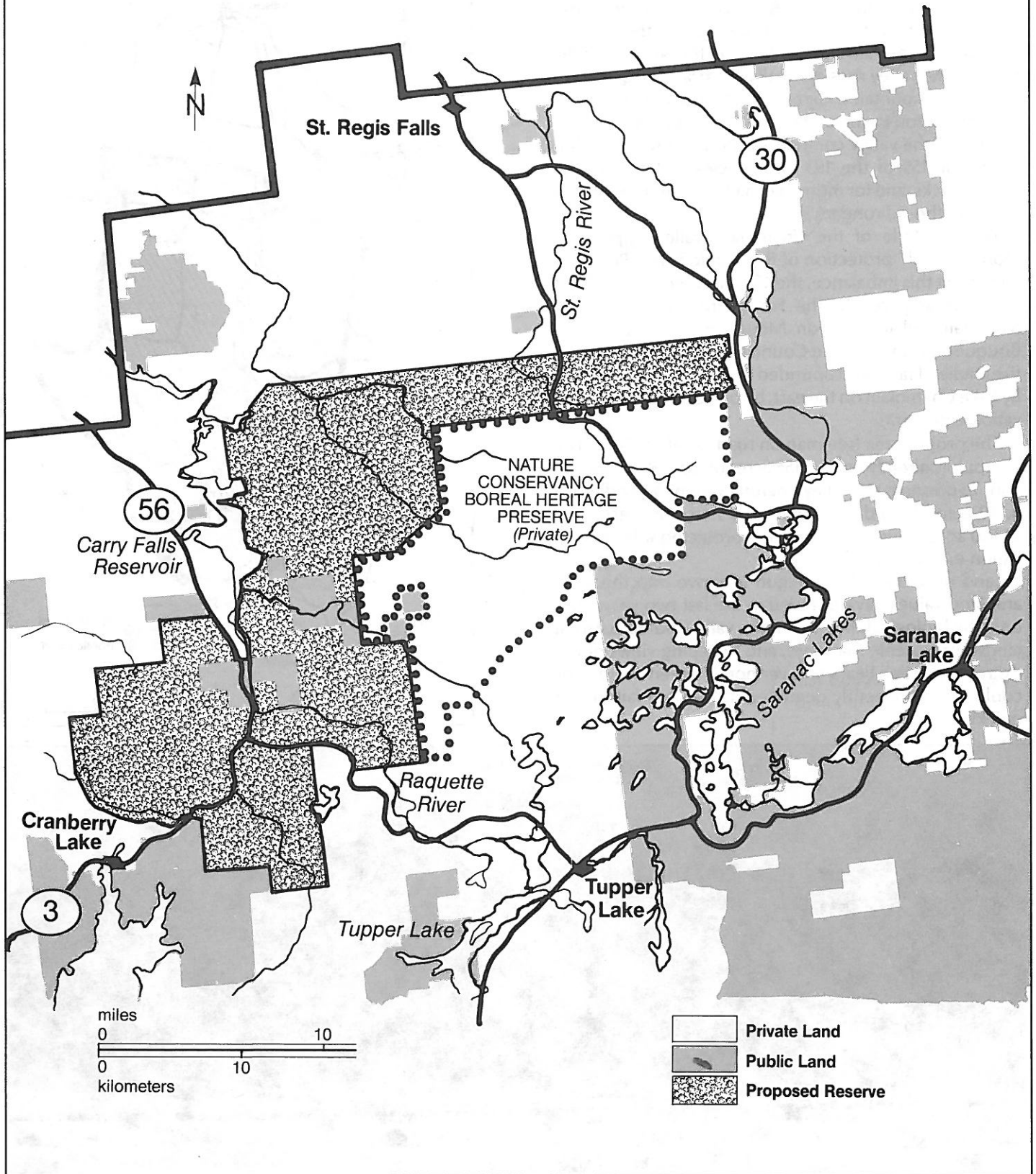
Most of the *high-elevation* boreal biome in the park is publicly-protected as part of the “forever wild” Forest Preserve. But the best of the *low-elevation* boreal biome is in private ownership. To save this exceptional community of life, the Council is urging the creation of a Low-

Elevation Boreal Heritage Reserve (see page 4). Some 60,000 acres of adjoining boreal biome is already well on the way to becoming a private preserve through the efforts of The Nature Conservancy, which has been acquiring easements (the equivalent of buying but *not* using development rights) from the landowners.

The Council has identified the need for State acquisition of an additional 115,000 acres of boreal habitat. Public purchase is still a practical possibility; only nine landowners are involved, and property costs are among the lowest in the State.

Along with another 10,000 acres of scattered Forest Preserve parcels, the proposed Boreal Heritage Reserve will insure the survival of one of the rarest biomes in New York State.

PROPOSED LOW ELEVATION BOREAL HERITAGE RESERVE



A PUBLIC RESERVE AND A PRIVATE PRESERVE — The proposed Boreal Heritage Reserve, to be owned by and accessible to the public, will complement the private natural preserve also pictured above. Together these areas will protect for posterity the State's most important (and now very vulnerable) low-elevation boreal biome.

SAVING A NATIONAL TREASURE

Champlain Valley Reserve Needed

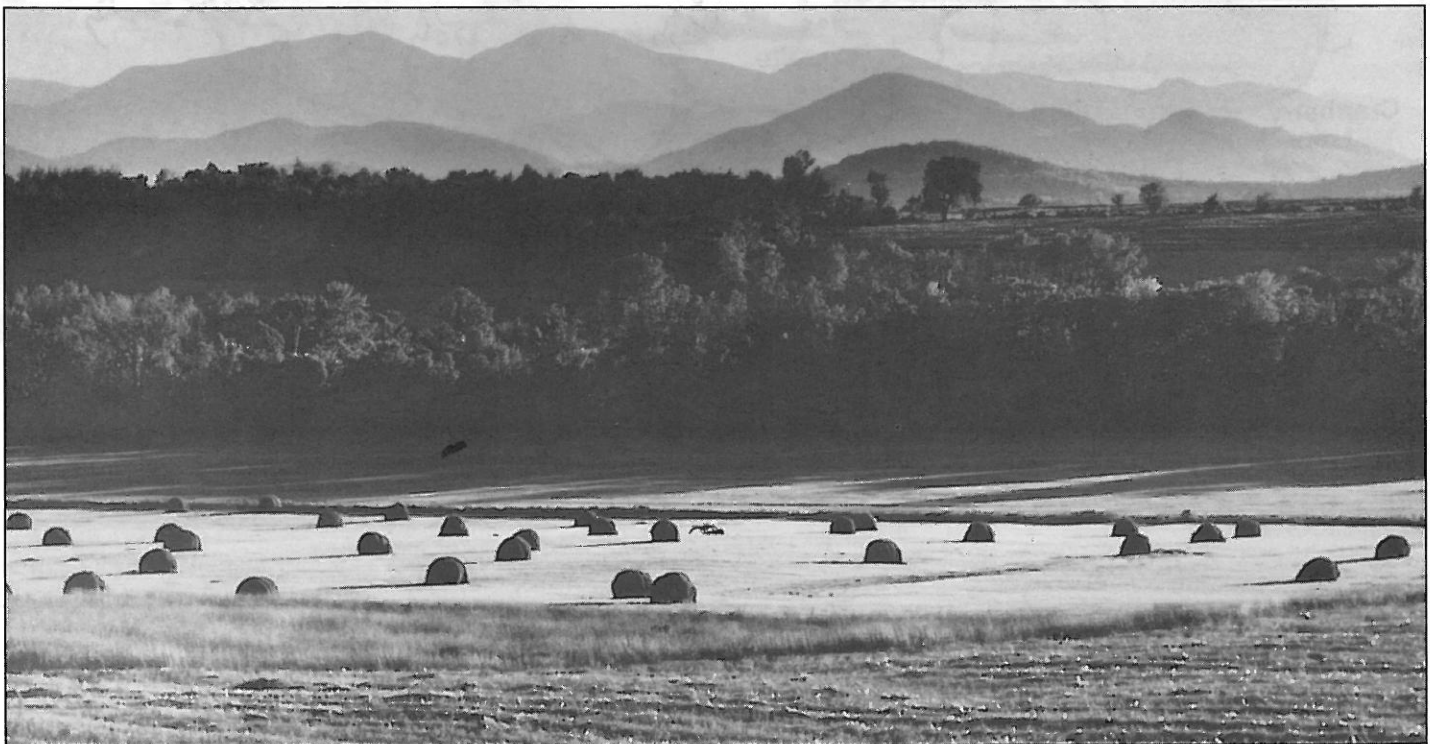
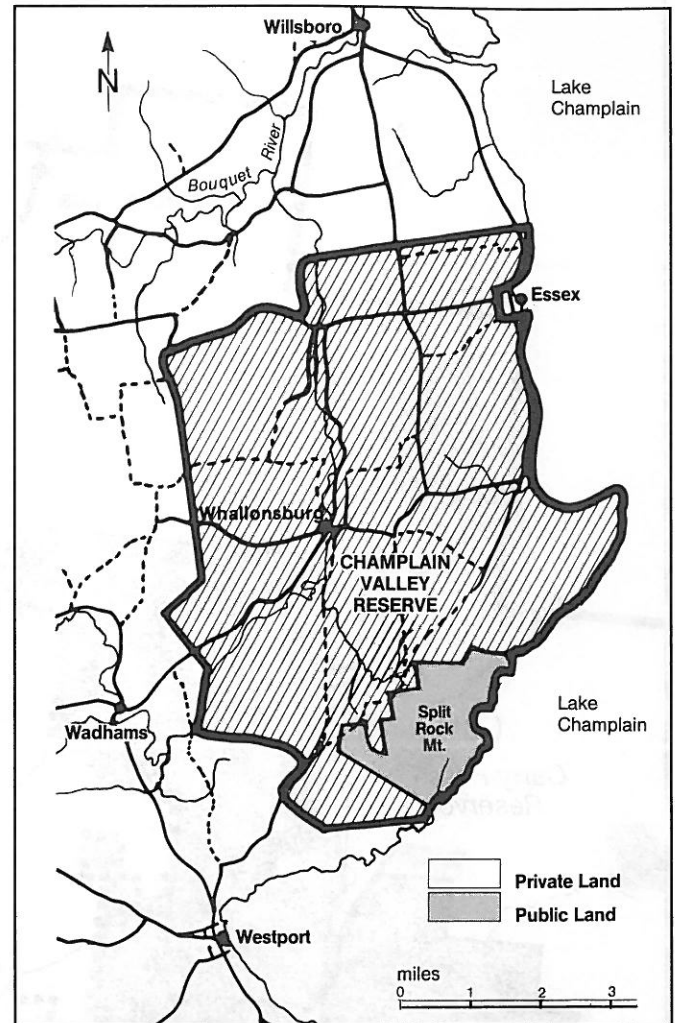
Lake Champlain, one of America's largest, loveliest, least developed freshwater lakes, forms the eastern boundary of the Adirondack Park. On the New York side, the pastoral valley rises gradually to a dramatic backdrop of hills and mountains. For both scenic and biologic diversity, this region is unmatched in the Adirondack Park.

Though the valley comprises only 5% of the park, it is home for 155 of the 193 bird species that nest in the Adirondacks, and for more than half of the 62 tree species native to the Adirondack region.

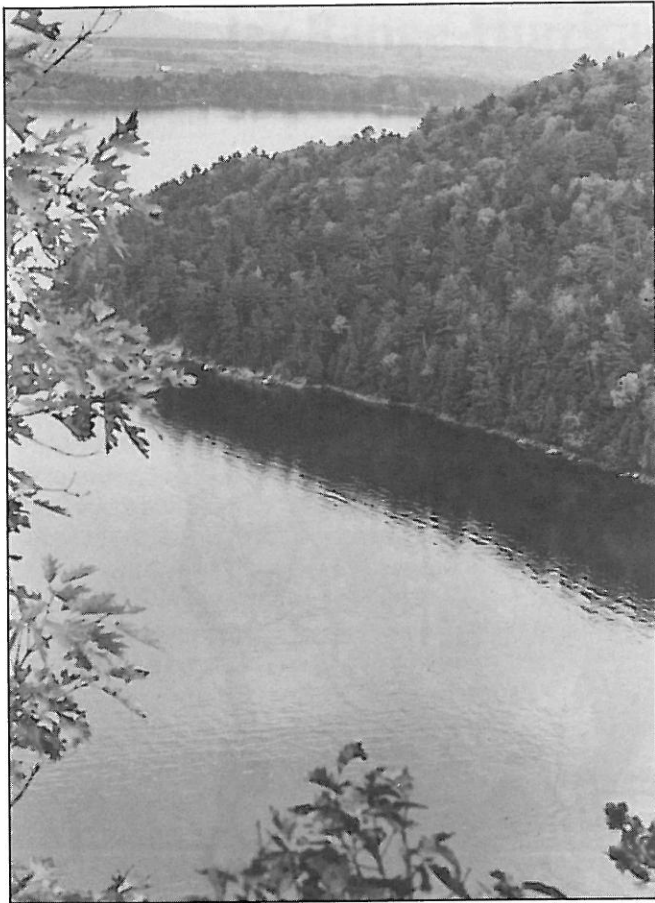
Yet very little of the Champlain Valley enjoys the "forever wild" protection of the public Forest Preserve. To correct this imbalance, the Council recommends that the State acquire, for the Forest Preserve, Split Rock Mountain, adjacent Coon Mountain, and the nearby Bouquet Mountains. The Council also recommends that the cradle of farmland bounded by these mountains, and by Lake Champlain on the east, be protected with conservation easements.

The project area (see map on right) totals 21,505 acres. The public already owns 2,155 acres on Split Rock Mountain. To preserve the valley's natural variety, an additional 8,350 acres should be acquired as Forest Preserve and 11,000 acres, much of it farmland, protected with conservation easements.

Land developers have begun to move into the area, and land values have doubled in the last two years. Not only the biological diversity of the valley, but its pastoral landscapes, scenic roadways, and sweeping views of the Adirondack High Peaks and Vermont's Green Mountains could be permanently degraded if the State fails to act quickly.

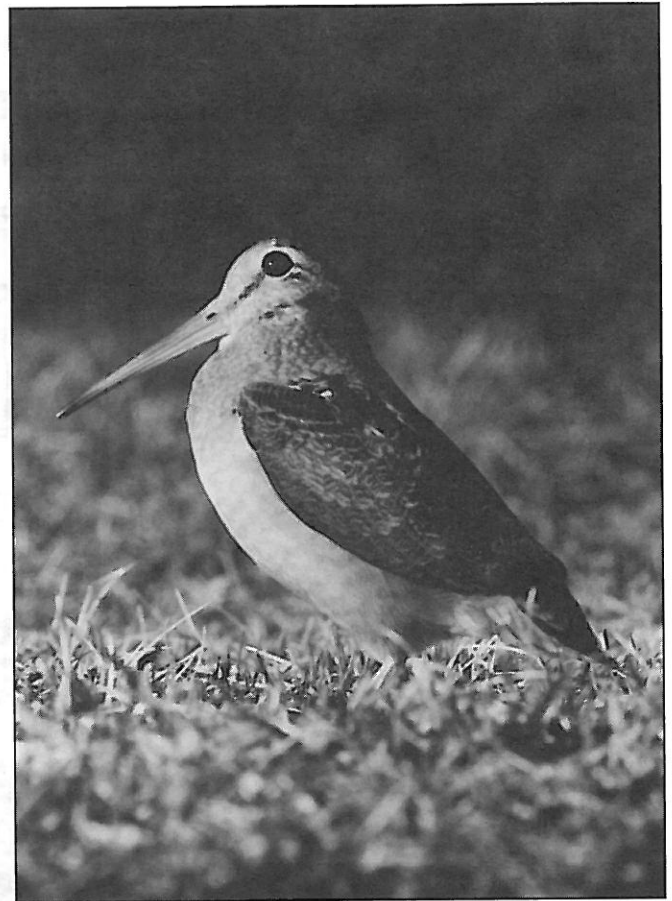


Gary Randorf



George D. Davis

SPLIT ROCK MOUNTAIN presides over the longest stretch of undeveloped shoreline on Lake Champlain.



Leonard Lee Rue III

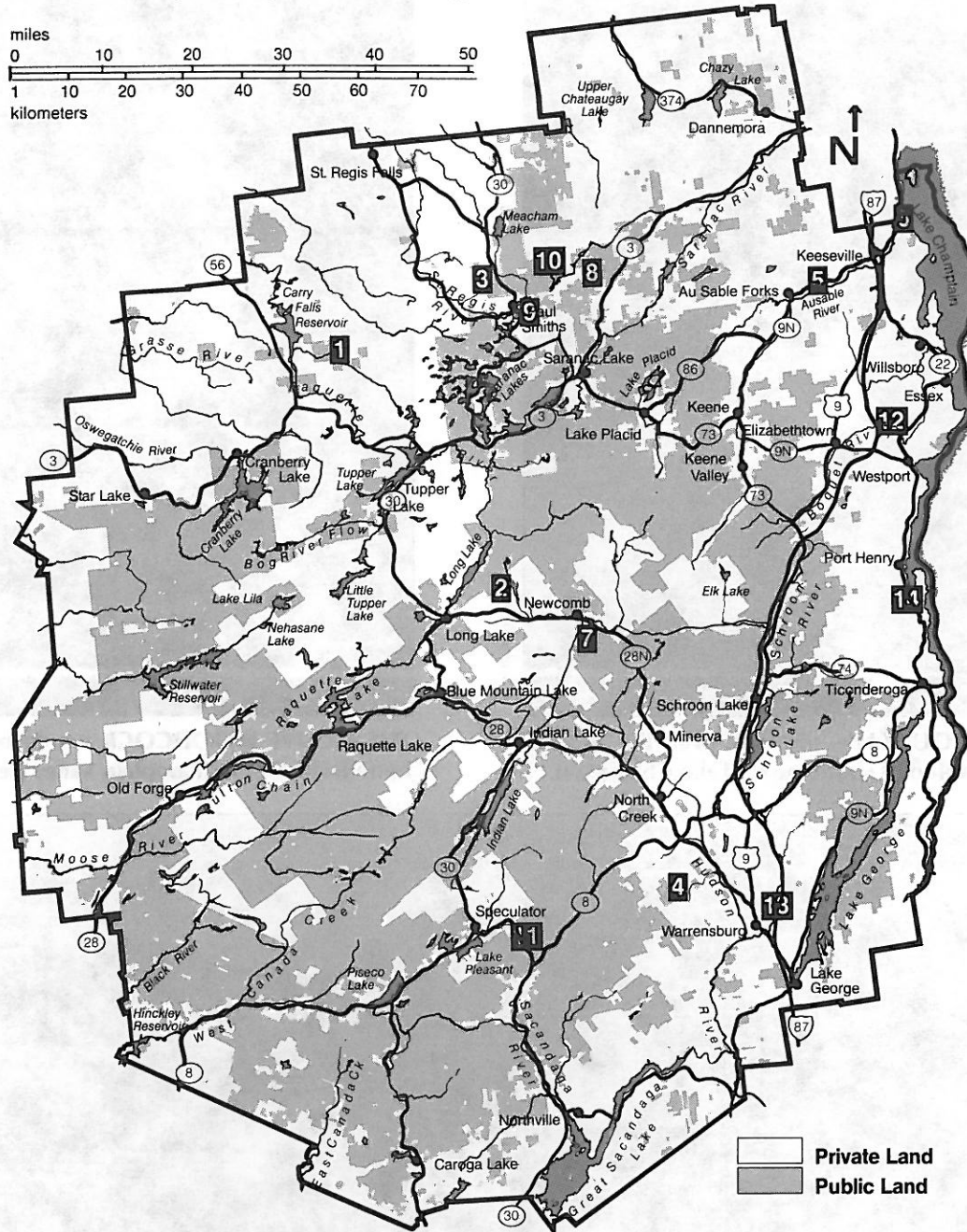
THE ELUSIVE WOODCOCK would be one of many beneficiaries of a Champlain Valley Reserve.



George D. Davis

Conservation easements can protect the agricultural, recreational, historic, and scenic resources as well as the biological diversity of the proposed Champlain Valley Reserve.

Exemplary Biological Communities



EXEMPLARY COMMUNITIES

Outstanding examples of biological communities (plants and associated wildlife) not well represented in the public Forest Preserve are found on private land in the Adirondack Park. Fourteen such sites involving 11,520 acres are listed here and described in Volume I.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 — Kildare Old Growth, 4,600 acres, Hopkinton | 8 — Rockdale Bog, 70 acres, Franklin |
| 2 — Huntington Forest Natural Area, 1,000 acres, Newcomb/Long Lake | 9 — Brighton Bog, 100 acres, Brighton |
| 3 — Forestmere Pine, 350 acres, Brighton | 10 — North Branch Alder Wetland, 870 acres, Brighton/Franklin |
| 4 — Huckleberry Mt. Red Pine, 1,220 acres, Johnsburg | 11 — Auger Flats Floodplain Forest, 160 acres, Wells |
| 5 — Clintonville Pitch/Jack Pine Barrens, 1,230 acres, Ausable/Black Brook | 12 — Boquet River Floodplain Forest, 130 acres, Westport |
| 6 — Wickham-Ausable Pitch Pine Barrens, 400 acres, Ausable | 13 — Schroon River Oxbows, 790 acres, Bolton/Warrensburg |
| 7 — Newcomb White Spruce/White Cedar Swamp, 310 acres, Newcomb | 14 — Bulwagga Bay Floodplain Forest, 290 acres, Crown Pt./Moriah |



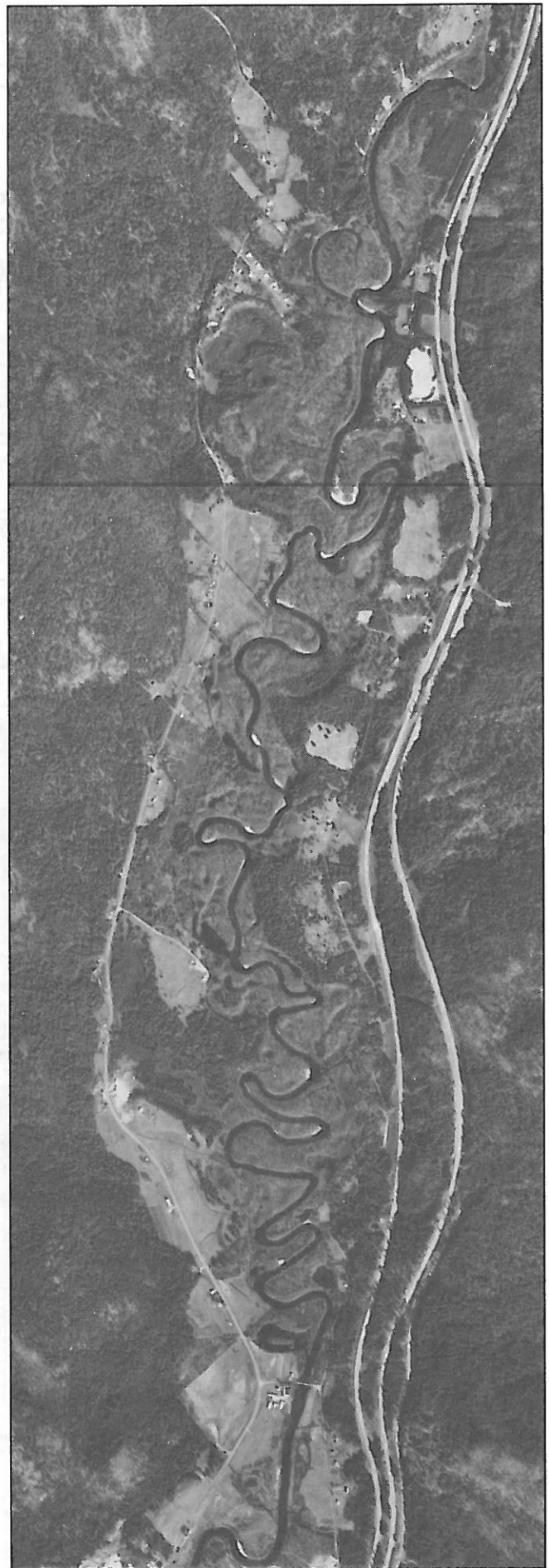
George D. Davis

FORESTMERE PINE — *White pines tower above lakeside tamaracks in this exemplary vegetative community. Located just west of Rte. 30 at McCollums, this beautiful and accessible site would be ideal for public recreation and education.*



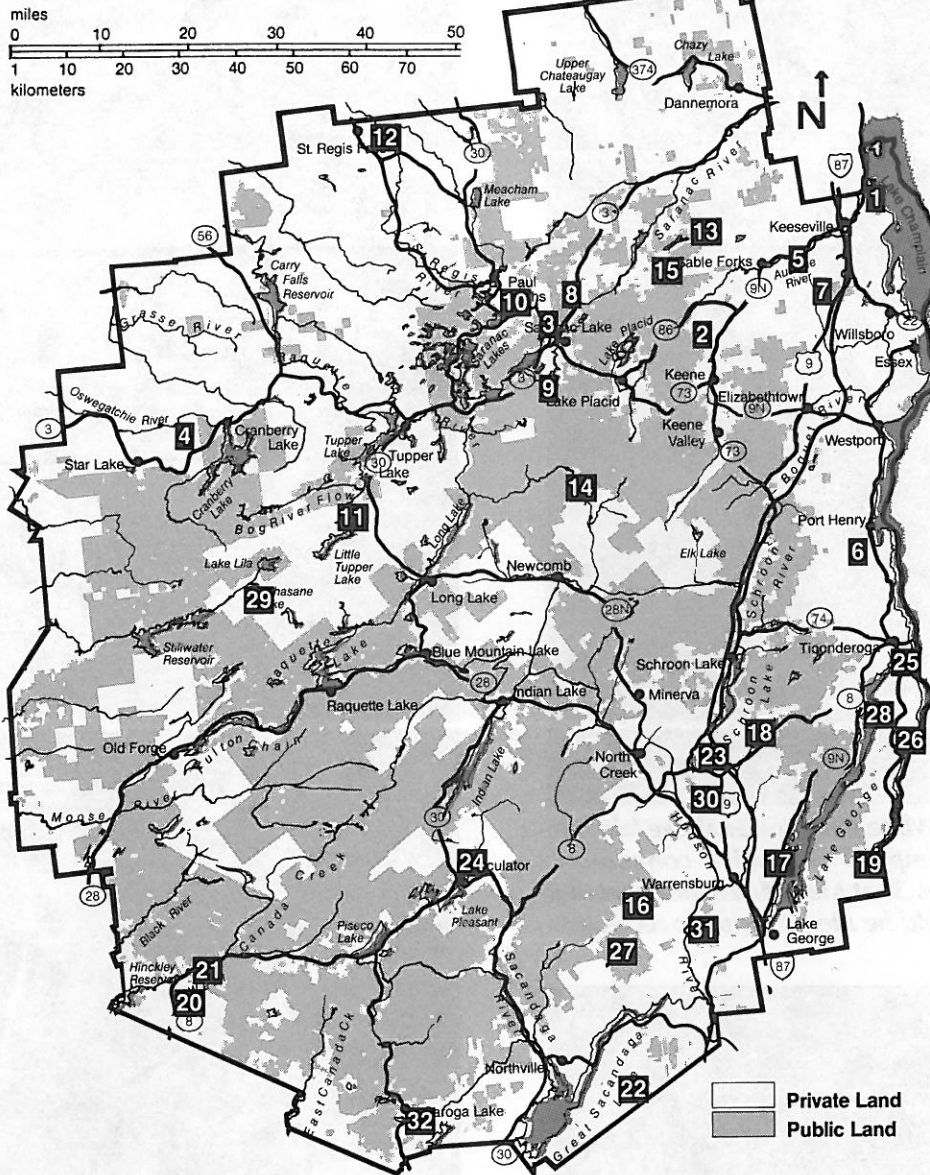
George D. Davis

SCHROON RIVER OXBOWS — *The wildly meandering Schroon River above Warrensburg (see aerial photo at right) is bordered by an uncommon silver-maple floodplain forest (above). State acquisition would protect the river corridor while insuring public access to excellent canoeing.*



AeroGraphics Corp.

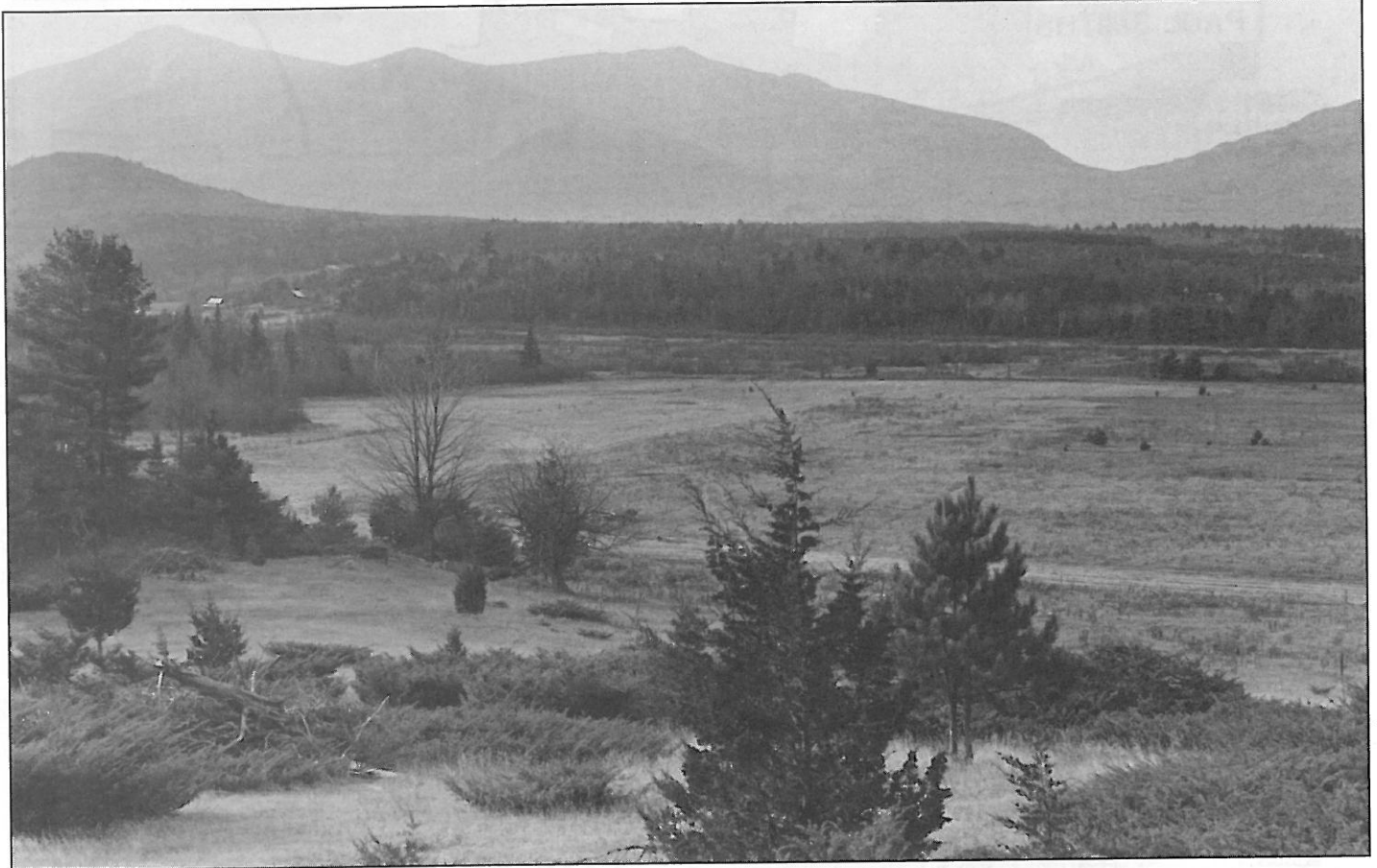
Biologically Rich Or Unusual Sites



RICH OR UNUSUAL SITES

Thirty-two sites, totaling 62,550 acres, were identified for their biological richness or distinctiveness. These sites are mapped and described in Volume I.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 — Ausable River Delta Floodplain Forest, 270 acres, Ausable/Peru | 17 — Boon Bay/Huddle Bay Wetlands, 150 acres, Bolton |
| 2 — Beaver Brook Valley, 2,790 acres, Wilmington | 18 — Brant Lake Bog, 100 acres, Horicon |
| 3 — Bloomingdale Bog, 1,110 acres, Harrietstown | 19 — Diameter and Pinnacle, 5,220 acres, Dresden/Fort Ann |
| 4 — Chaumont Pond Wetlands, 4,750 acres, Clifton | 20 — Kettle Lakes, 530 acres, Ohio |
| 5 — Cook Mountain, 1,980 acres, Ausable | 21 — Wilmurt Esker, Kettle Holes, Wetlands, 480 acres, Ohio |
| 6 — Coot Hill Hawk Watch, 440 acres, Crown Pt./Moriah | 22 — Ireland Vly, 7,180 acres, Edinburg/Providence |
| 7 — Lime Ledges/Pok-O-Moonshine, 5,040 acres, Chesterfield | 23 — Jenks Swamp, 980 acres, Chester/Horicon |
| 8 — Oregon Plains/Cold Brook, 2,150 acres, Franklin | 24 — Kunjamuk Wetlands, 2,220 acres, Lake Pleasant |
| 9 — Oseetah Lake Wetlands, 460 acres, Harrietstown | 25 — La Chute River Delta Wetlands, 220 acres, Ticonderoga |
| 10 — Rickerson Brook Headwaters, 5,580 acres, Brighton/Harrietstown | 26 — Lake Champlain Narrows, 1,050 acres, Dresden/Putnam |
| 11 — Round Lake Wetlands, 3,090 acres, Long Lake | 27 — Lens Lake Bog/Livingston Lake, 780 acres, Stony Creek/Day |
| 12 — St. Regis Falls Wetlands, 650 acres, Waverly | 28 — Putnam Rookery, 200 acres, Putnam |
| 13 — Silver Lake Mountains, 2,210 acres, Black Brook | 29 — Shingle Shanty Brook Wetlands, 3,150 acres, Long Lake |
| 14 — Tahawus Talus, 160 acres, Newcomb | 30 — Sullivan Pond Wetlands, 270 acres, Chester |
| 15 — Third Burnt Hill, 1,070 acres, Black Brook | 31 — Three Sisters-Number Seven Mountains, 2,830 acres, Warrensburg |
| 16 — Baldhead Mt./Wolf Pond Wetlands, 1,540 acres, Stony Creek/Thurman | 32 — West Stony Creek Headwaters, 3,900 acres, Bleeker/Caroga |



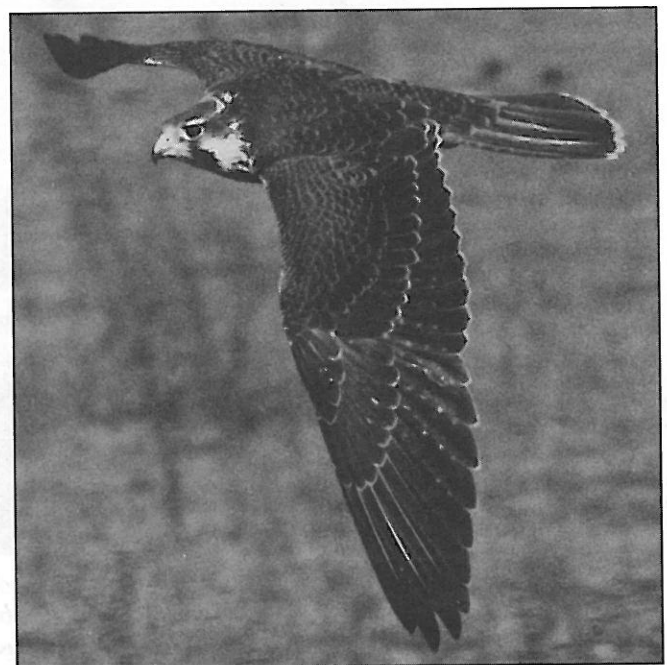
George D. Davis

BEAVER BROOK VALLEY — Here one of the most productive brook-trout wetlands in the park is surrounded by extraordinarily diverse upland communities. The pastures and hay fields still in use add to the diversity. The spruce-fir on Bassett Mountain, along with the white spruce and white pine at lower elevations, are boreal in nature — but in this valley they meet the more southerly red oak, basswood, and white ash. In all, 32 tree species are found here. The rich mix of habitats supports a wide variety of wildlife.



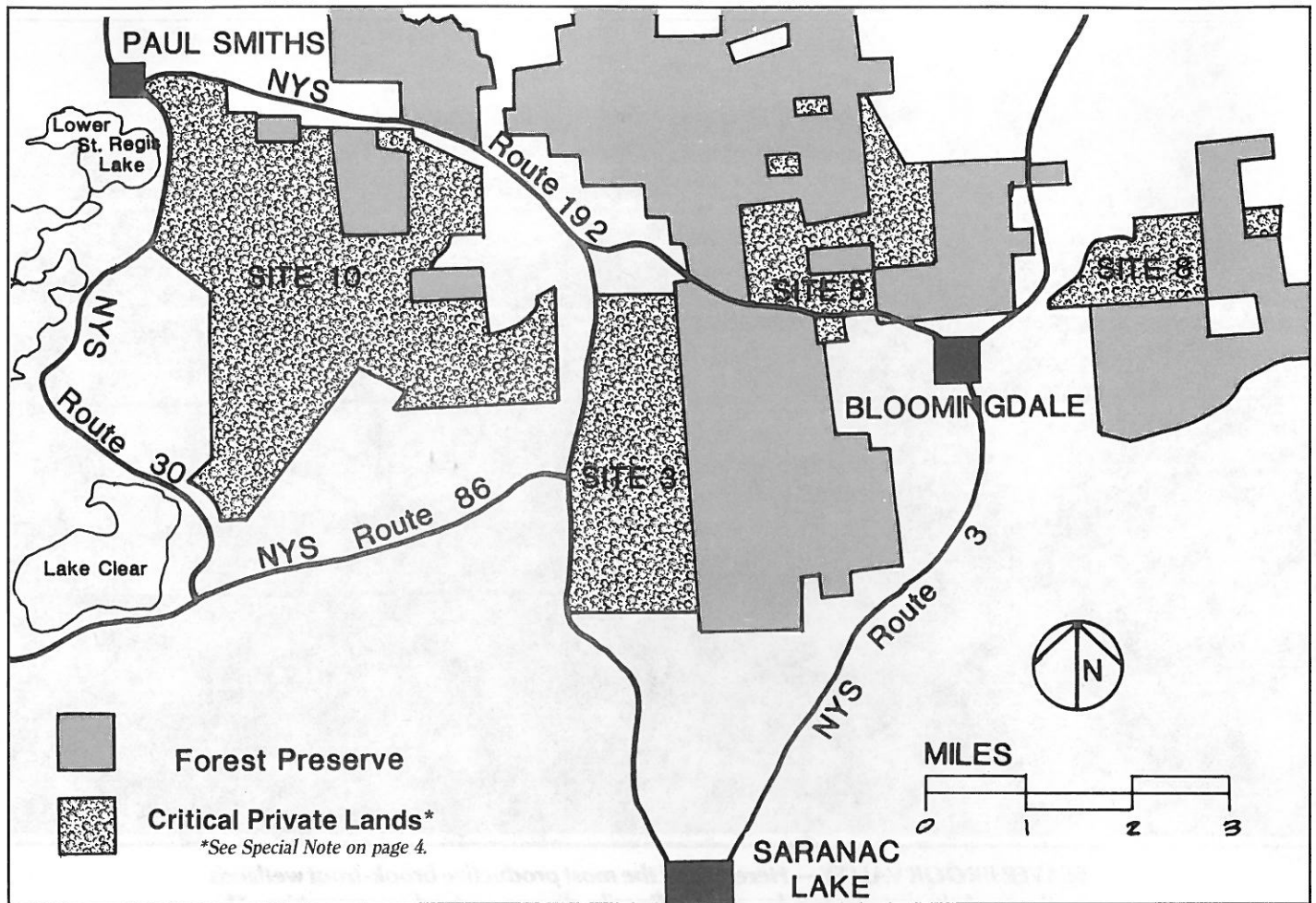
Leonard Lee Rue III

RING-NECKED DUCK — The Oseetah Lake Wetlands (site #9 on page 10) provide one of the few nesting areas for this bird in the Adirondack Park.



Mark Wilson

IMMATURE PEREGRINE FALCON — The spectacular rock ledges of the Silver Lake Mountains (site #13 on page 10) are ideal nesting habitat for peregrine falcons, golden eagles and ravens.



BIOLOGICAL TREASURE TROVES — The Council has identified three biologically-rich areas clustered just north of Saranac Lake Village: Rickerson Brook Headwaters (site #10), Bloomingdale Bog (site #3) and the Oregon Plains (site #8).



BLOOMINGDALE BOG — An outstanding example of a climax flat-bog community, extremely rare in New York State. The bog contains at least four rare plant species — ground fir, mountain rice, Vasey's rush and dwarf birch. Boreal birds of special significance breed here, including the spruce grouse, black-backed three-toed woodpecker, grey jay, boreal chickadee, rusty blackbird, Lincoln's sparrow, and white-winged crossbill. The proposed acquisition would protect the bog, its surroundings, and the spectacular scenic vista from Rte. 86 at Donnelly's Corners.

Council Advocates Restoration Studies

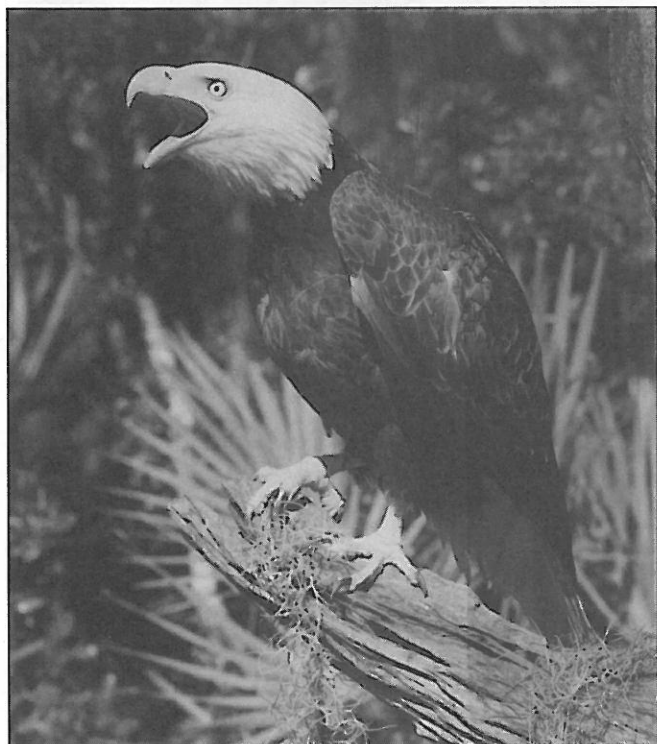
Unlike most of our increasingly crowded and exploited planet, the Adirondack Park is wilder today than a century ago. About 40% of the park is now Forest Preserve, an incomparable public resource that must be kept "forever wild." Much of the remaining private land is managed responsibly by timber companies for a sustained yield of trees — in contrast to the destructive "cut and run" logging practices of the 19th century.

In a natural environment, wildlife is the hallmark of quality. The Adirondack Park could be further improved by the re-establishment of wildlife species extirpated by human activities during the past 150 years.

Such efforts already appear to be working for the peregrine falcon and the bald eagle. An effort to restore the Canada lynx is currently underway. The moose, meanwhile, has begun a tentative restoration effort of its own.

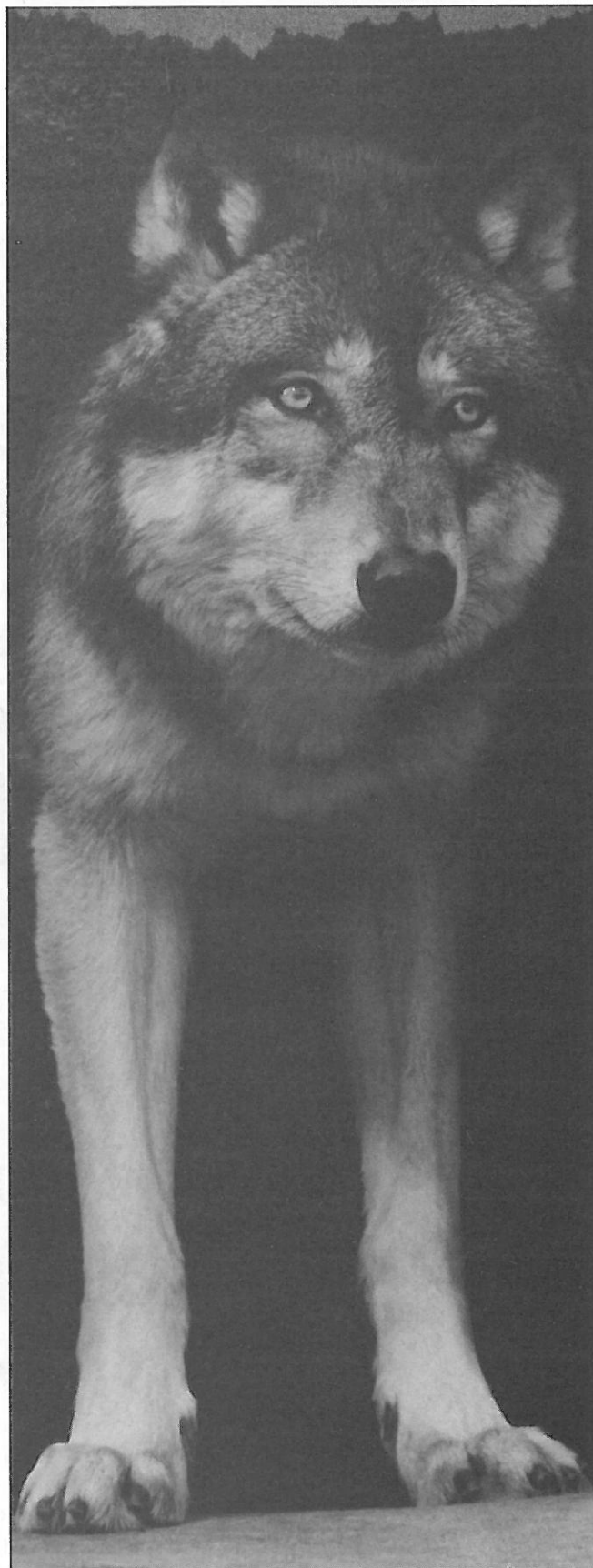
But the moose needs all the help we can give it if a healthy breeding population is to be restored by the year 2020. And what of other extirpated species like the wolf and cougar? The Adirondack Council recommends that biological studies be undertaken to determine the feasibility of bringing these native Adirondackers back to their former home.

For example, the Adirondack Park may possess sufficient wildness and range for the timber wolf to return and survive here (see map on opposite page). Whether the biological and political conditions are right for wolf restoration should be the subject of an immediate study by the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, in cooperation with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.



Len Rue, Jr.

BALD EAGLE — On the way back in the Adirondack Park.



Len Rue, Jr.

TIMBER WOLF — Is there still a place for this former resident of the Adirondack ecosystem?



Barbara McMartin

VOLUME TWO:

Completing the Adirondack Wilderness System

The people of New York State now have an extraordinary opportunity to secure for all time the finest wilderness legacy east of the Mississippi River. This can be accomplished if the State moves decisively to establish in the Adirondack Park three new public Wilderness Areas and to round out 13 other tracts already designated as Wilderness.

In the second of its 2020 Vision studies (summarized in these pages) the Adirondack Council recommends that the Adirondack Wilderness System be enlarged from 1,038,874 to 1,650,478 acres. One-third of the additions can be made by classifying existing public Forest Preserve as Wilderness; the rest can be accomplished by state acquisition of key private holdings.

Fulfilling The Park's Wild Promise

In the first of its 2020 Vision reports, the Adirondack Council identified 218,420 acres of private parkland of great biological value in need of permanent protection; in our next report we will set forth recommendations for expanding, filling in, and improving recreational opportunities on the state-owned Forest Preserve classified as Wild Forest.

This report is intended to serve as a policymaker's guide for completing one of this nation's great public assets — the lands and waters of the Adirondack Forest Preserve designated as Wilderness.

Public purchase of some important private tracts identified in this study may not be feasible until well into the next century. In such cases, the acquisition of conservation easements, which preclude future development, will suffice until the owner, or the owner's successors, agree to sell. ***Of overriding importance is that these critical private lands and waters be preserved in their natural, undeveloped condition so that the option for eventual public ownership remains open.***

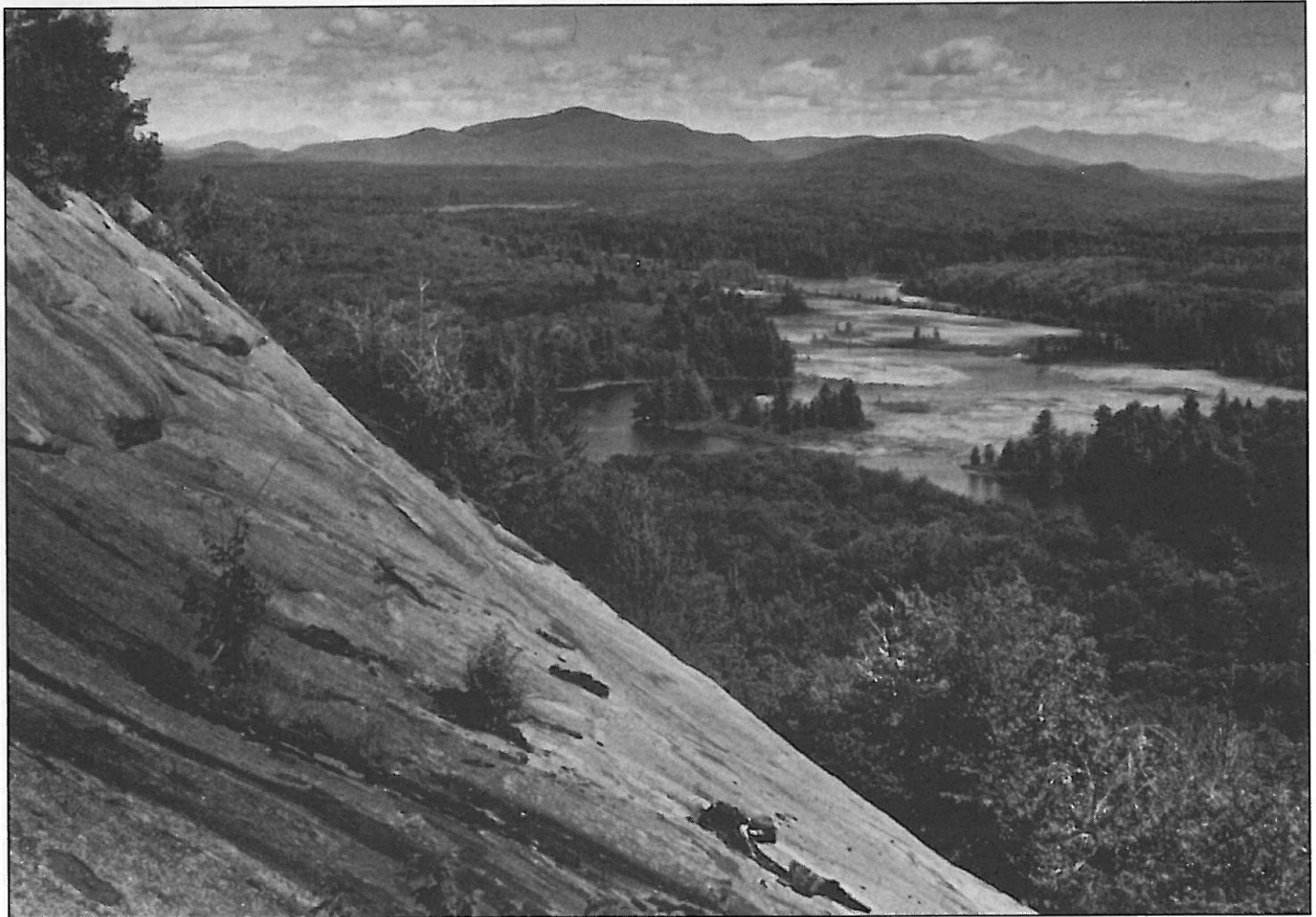
As it undertakes to negotiate with landowners for these essential additions to the Wilderness System, the State

must show respect for and sensitivity toward established uses of private land. Such uses include commercial forestry, hunting camps on timber company lands, snowmobile trails, and private estates. Where a snowmobile trail must be closed, another trail of comparable length and quality should be opened. Where hunting camps might be displaced and motorized access prevented, the State should provide comparable hunting opportunities by means of an aggressive conservation-easement program.

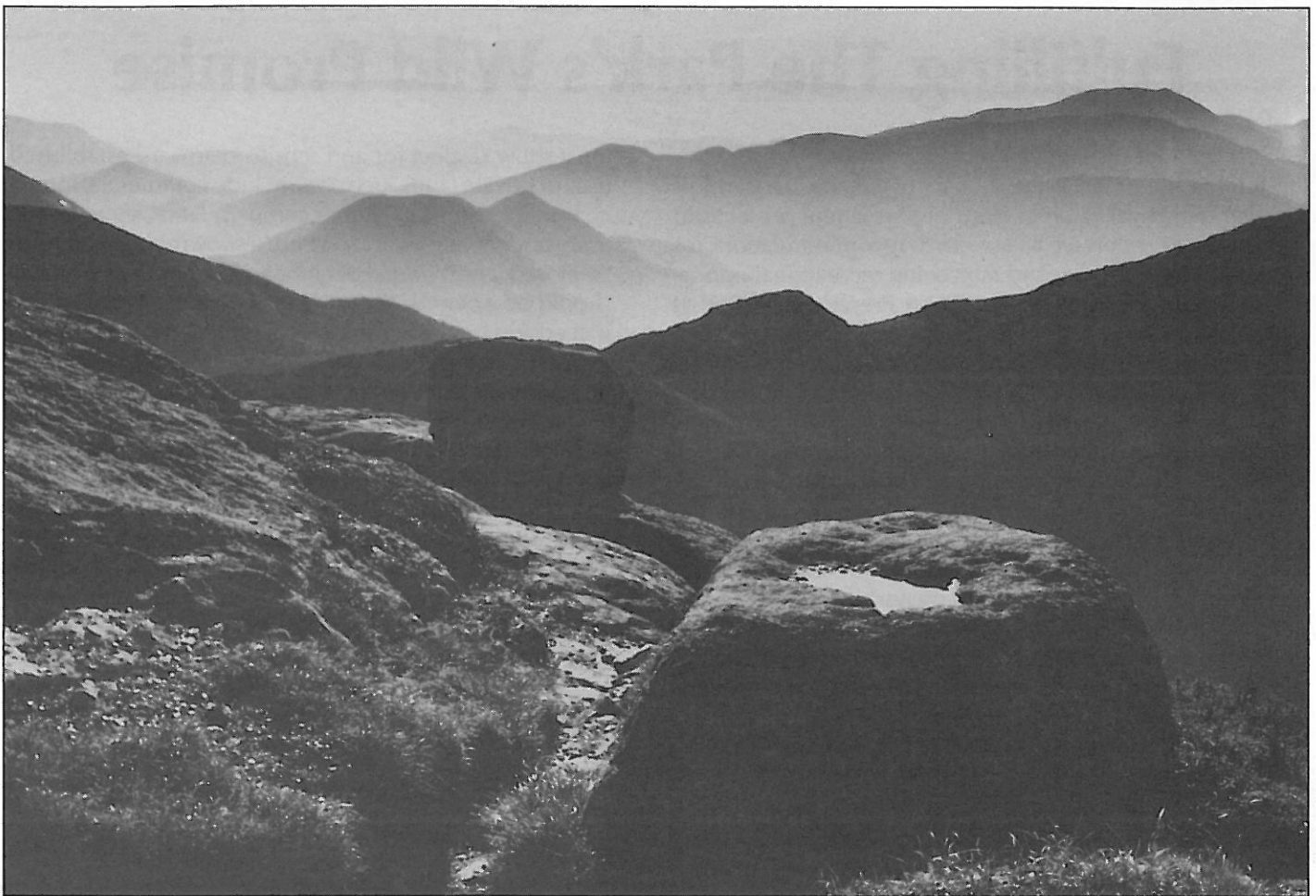
The state's power of eminent domain should be used only as a last resort when a critical private tract is threatened with irreversible change and degradation.

Today the people of New York State own title to the finest vestiges of wilderness in the northeastern United States. This splendid natural legacy is testimony to the foresight of our forebears. How fully and quickly we seize the opportunities to complete the Adirondack Wilderness System will be a test of this generation's foresight.

One thing is certain: time is of the essence. Once wilderness is subdivided and developed, it is wilderness no more.



Dave Dayger



Gary Randorf

Adirondack Wilderness System

The primary purpose for designating public land as Wilderness is to preserve natural biological systems. The preservation of natural beauty and the opportunity for outdoor recreation in a superb natural setting are other important benefits.

In contrast to those areas where man and his works dominate, Wilderness is defined as “an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”

Wilderness is further defined as:

- having been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable;
- offering outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation;
- constituting at least 10,000 acres of land and water, or being of sufficient size and character to be preserved and used in an unimpaired condition.

Wilderness areas are those increasingly rare and precious places where a hiker, canoer, fisherman, camper, cross-country skier, hunter or picnicker can hear the cry of a loon instead of the roar of a motorboat, where he or she can breathe spruce-scented air instead of exhaust fumes. No motors of any kind are allowed in Wilderness: no jeeps, jet skis or speedboats, no floatplanes, all-terrain

vehicles, dirt bikes or snowmobiles. In contrast to almost every place else on our human-dominated planet, natural tranquility prevails.

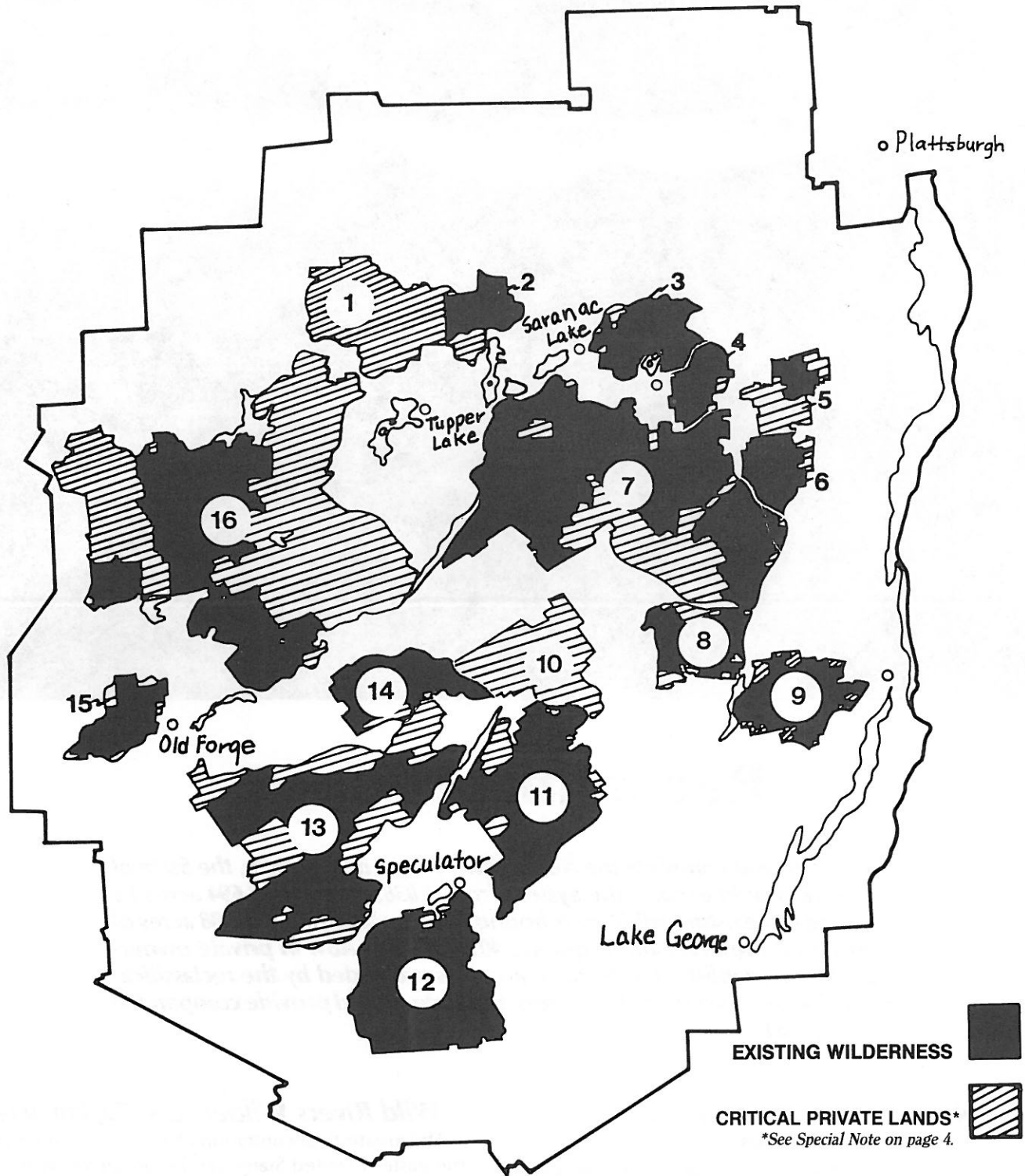
DEFINITIONS

Adirondack Park: Created in 1892 by the New York State Legislature, this largest of all parks in the contiguous United States contains six million acres of intermixed public and private land. About 58% of the park is privately owned and devoted mainly to forestry, open-space recreation, and agriculture.

Adirondack Forest Preserve: The state-owned land in the Adirondack Park is “Forest Preserve” and protected by the State Constitution as “forever wild.” The hundreds of parcels of Adirondack Forest Preserve add up to about 2,600,000 acres.

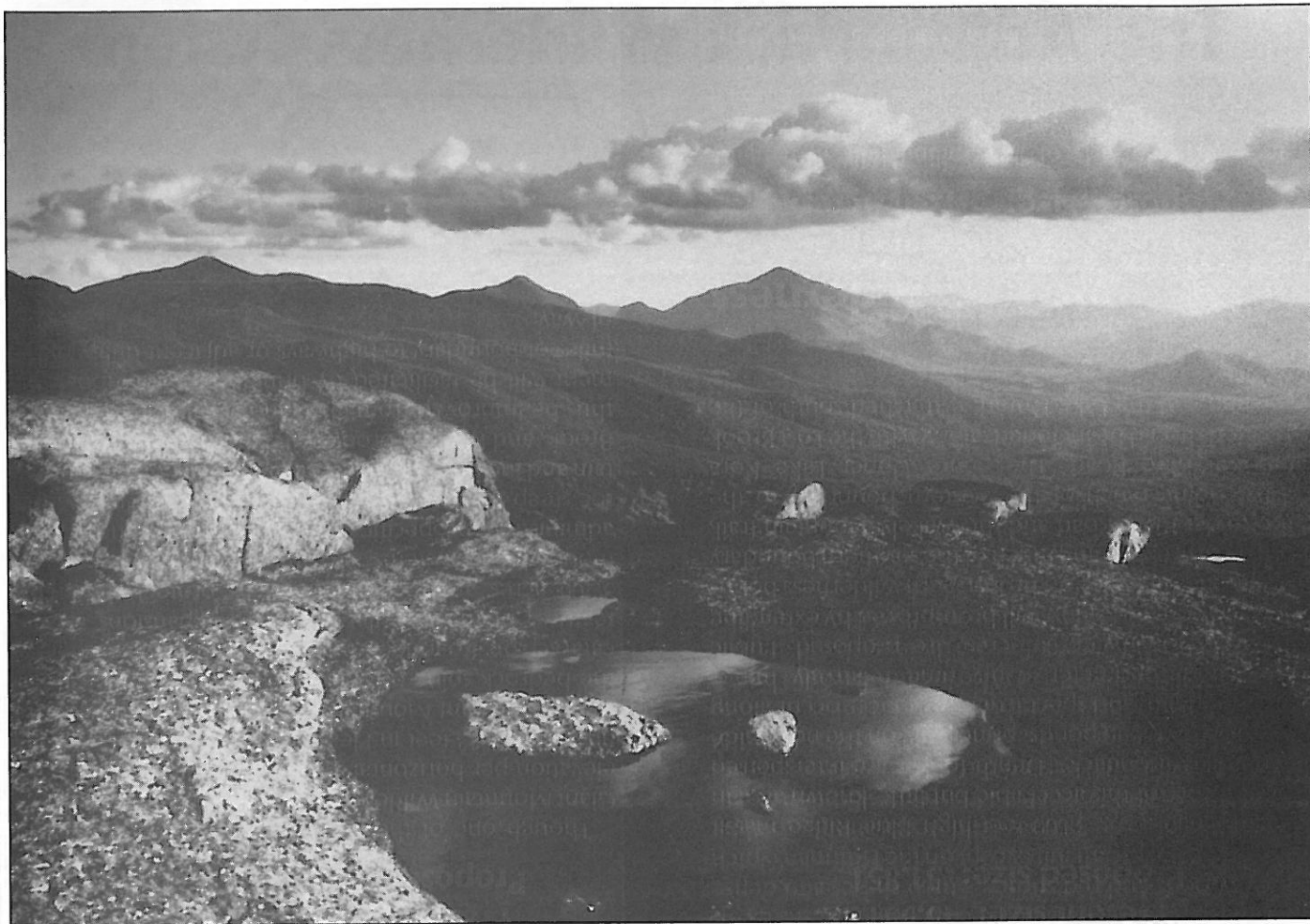
Adirondack Wilderness System: This special category of Adirondack Forest Preserve totals 1,038,874 acres — about 45% of the state-owned land and one-sixth of the entire park. For the purpose of this report, the St. Regis Canoe Area is also included in the Wilderness System.

The Adirondack Wilderness System



- 1 — Proposed Boreal Wilderness
- 2 — St. Regis Canoe Area
- 3 — McKenzie Mt. Wilderness
- 4 — Sentinel Range Wilderness
- 5 — Jay/Hurricane Wilderness
- 6 — Giant Mountain Wilderness
- 7 — High Peaks (& Dix Mt.) Wilderness
- 8 — Hoffman Notch Wilderness

- 9 — Pharaoh Lake Wilderness
- 10 — Proposed Wild Rivers Wilderness
- 11 — Siamese Ponds Wilderness
- 12 — Silver Lake Wilderness
- 13 — West Canada Lake Wilderness
- 14 — Blue Ridge Wilderness
- 15 — Ha-de-ron-dah Wilderness
- 16 — Proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness



Gary Randorf

Recommendations

To secure and complete the Adirondack Wilderness System, the State of New York should expand the System from 1,038,874 to 1,659,694 acres by rounding out existing wilderness boundaries, reclassifying 194,308 acres of other Forest Preserve, and acquiring 407,906 acres now in private ownership. When established motorized access is precluded by the reclassification of Forest Preserve to Wilderness, the State should provide comparable access elsewhere.

Bob Marshall Great Wilderness ***408,777 acres***

This proposed wilderness area can be established by combining three existing wilderness areas and five primitive areas with 178,310 acres of private land acquisitions. This will be the largest block of undisturbed open space east of the Mississippi and north of the Everglades.

Boreal Wilderness: 73,300 acres

The best of the park's boreal ecosystem (northern spruce/fir forests and sphagnum bogs) can be preserved in this proposed wilderness area through the consolidation of public lands and the acquisition of private lands.

Wild Rivers Wilderness: 72,480 acres

The greatest concentration of wild and scenic rivers in the eastern United States can be preserved in this proposed wilderness area through the consolidation of public lands and the acquisition of private lands.

Complete Existing Wilderness

By consolidating various public tracts and acquiring 142,696 acres of private land, the State can expand present wilderness areas to more rational ecological and administrative boundaries. In so doing, the public will be able to safeguard these rare and fragile wilderness remnants for all time.

NEW WILDERNESS PROPOSALS

Bob Marshall Great Wilderness

Size: 408,777 Acres

Bob Marshall, a forester, founder of the Wilderness Society, and summer resident of the Adirondacks, was the first person to identify the wilderness potential of the Cranberry Lake-Beaver River country in the western Adirondacks. In a survey conducted in 1935-36, Marshall analyzed all forested areas in the United States embracing 300,000 acres or more which "have not yet been invaded by [public] routes of mechanized transportation." Included on his list of 48 roadless remnants was the 380,000-acre Adirondack tract.

A decade earlier, Marshall had hiked most of the Cranberry Lake region. Along the way he ranked, according to degree of scenic beauty, some 94 ponds. In his travels through the region he noted that "only a subdued light filtered through the dense crowns of the dark spruce and hemlock . . . The old trail underfoot was the last connecting link with the pioneers of a century ago . . . when the North Woods were one unbroken stretch of luxuriant forest."

Remarkably, more than half-a-century later the opportunity to preserve such a roadless area still exists. In fact, with the abandonment of the Adirondack railroad, an even larger public wilderness could be established. The area proposed by the Council would be of sufficient size and remoteness to sustain viable populations of most wildlife species native to the Adirondacks (including wolves, moose and possibly even cougars), safeguard

examples of almost every Adirondack ecosystem, and serve as a recreationist's paradise of 441 lakes and ponds and more than 70 miles of designated wild rivers.

The Adirondack Council specifically recommends that the State move without delay to establish a 408,777-acre Bob Marshall Great Wilderness by consolidating the:

- 101,171-acre Five Ponds Wilderness
- 14,625-acre Pepperbox Wilderness
- 50,100-acre Pigeon Lake Wilderness
- 6,676-acre Wilderness Lakes Primitive Area
- 7,215-acre Lake Lila Primitive Area
- 1,042-acre Low's Lake Primitive Area
- 50-acre Buck Pond Primitive Area
- 10-acre Beaver River Primitive Area,
- 800 acres of the Hitchens Pond Primitive Area
- 38,970 acres of Forest Preserve presently classified as wild forest
- 16,228 acres of recently-purchased Forest Preserve not yet classified.

In addition, the State should purchase 178,310 privately-owned acres from twenty-two owners.

Such a wilderness cannot be established overnight, of course. What is essential now is a public commitment to the realization of this dream, with an acquisition process that reflects the utmost consideration for the 22 land-owners involved.

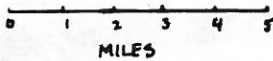
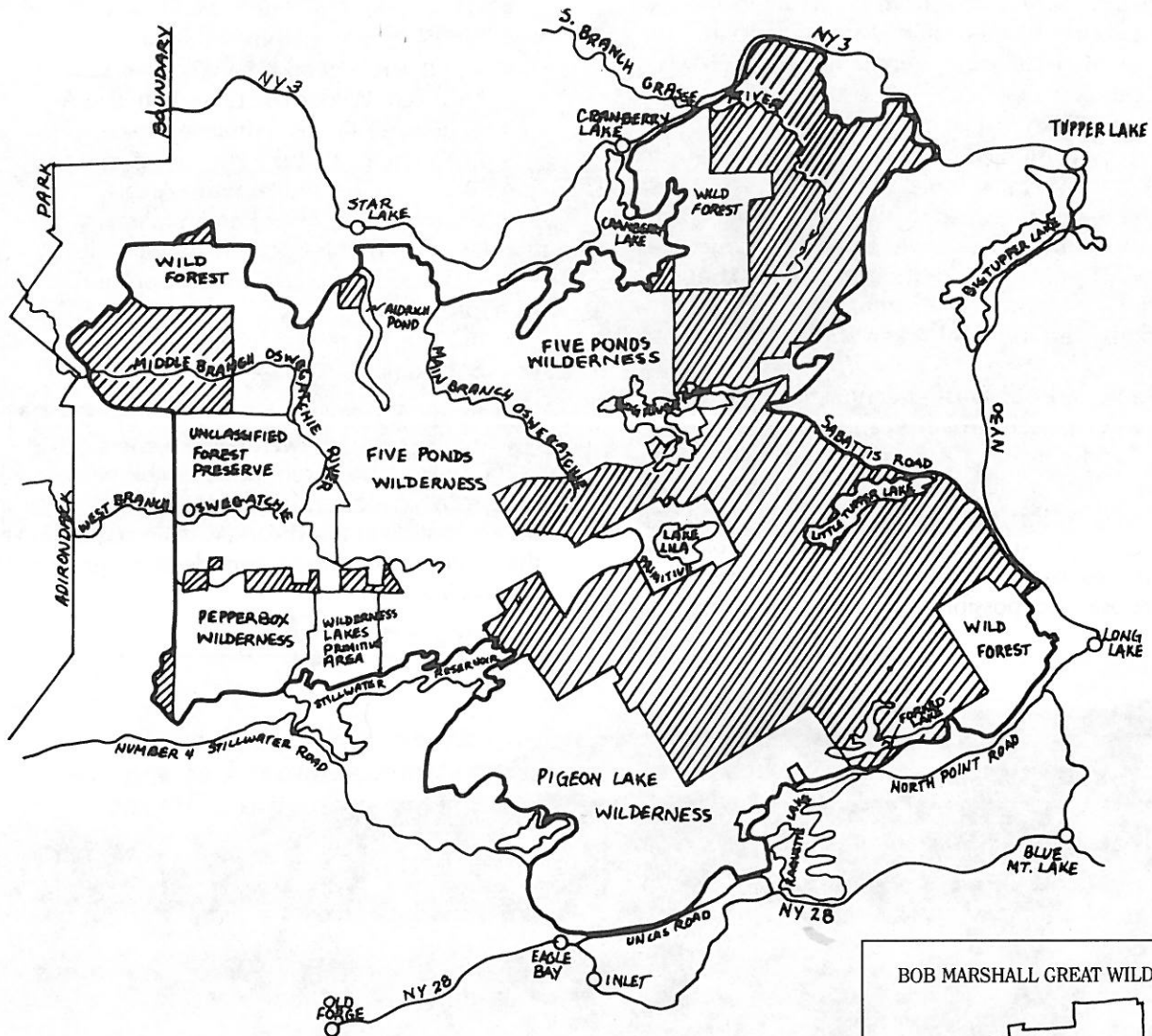


Gary Randorf

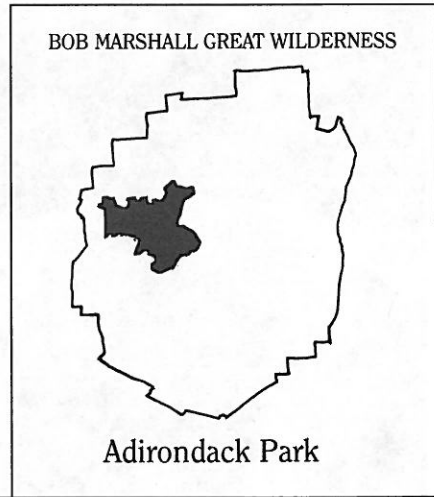
“Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we pollute the last clean air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence.”

Wallace Stegner

Bob Marshall Great Wilderness

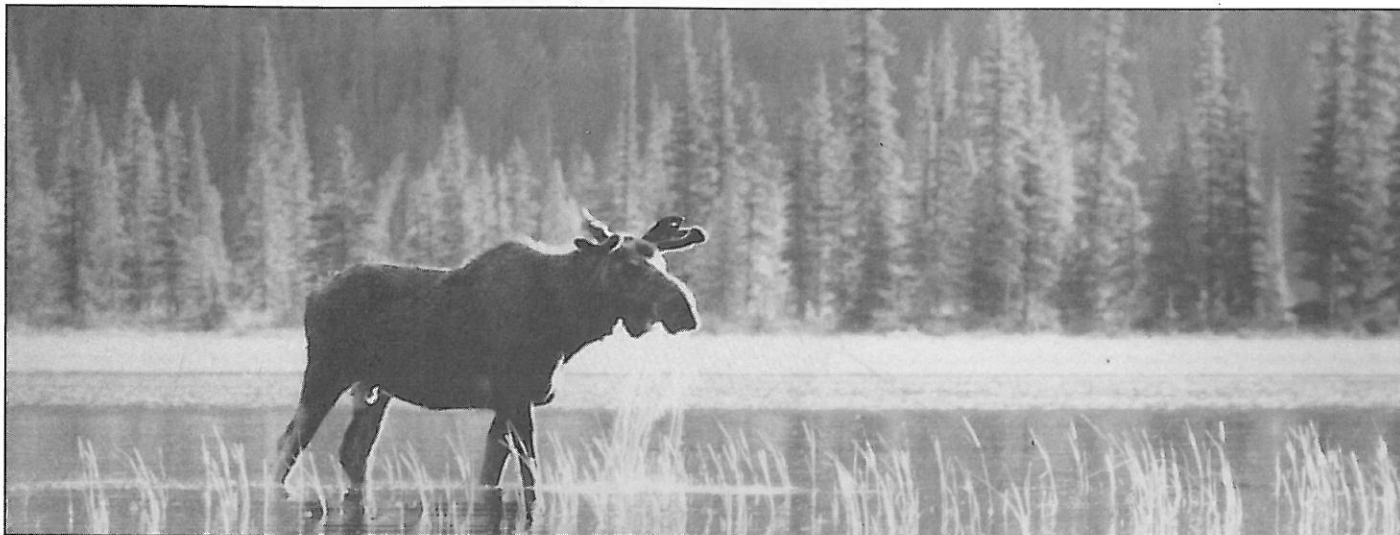


Critical Private Lands* 
*See Special Note on page 4.



Proposed Boreal Wilderness

Size: 73,300 Acres



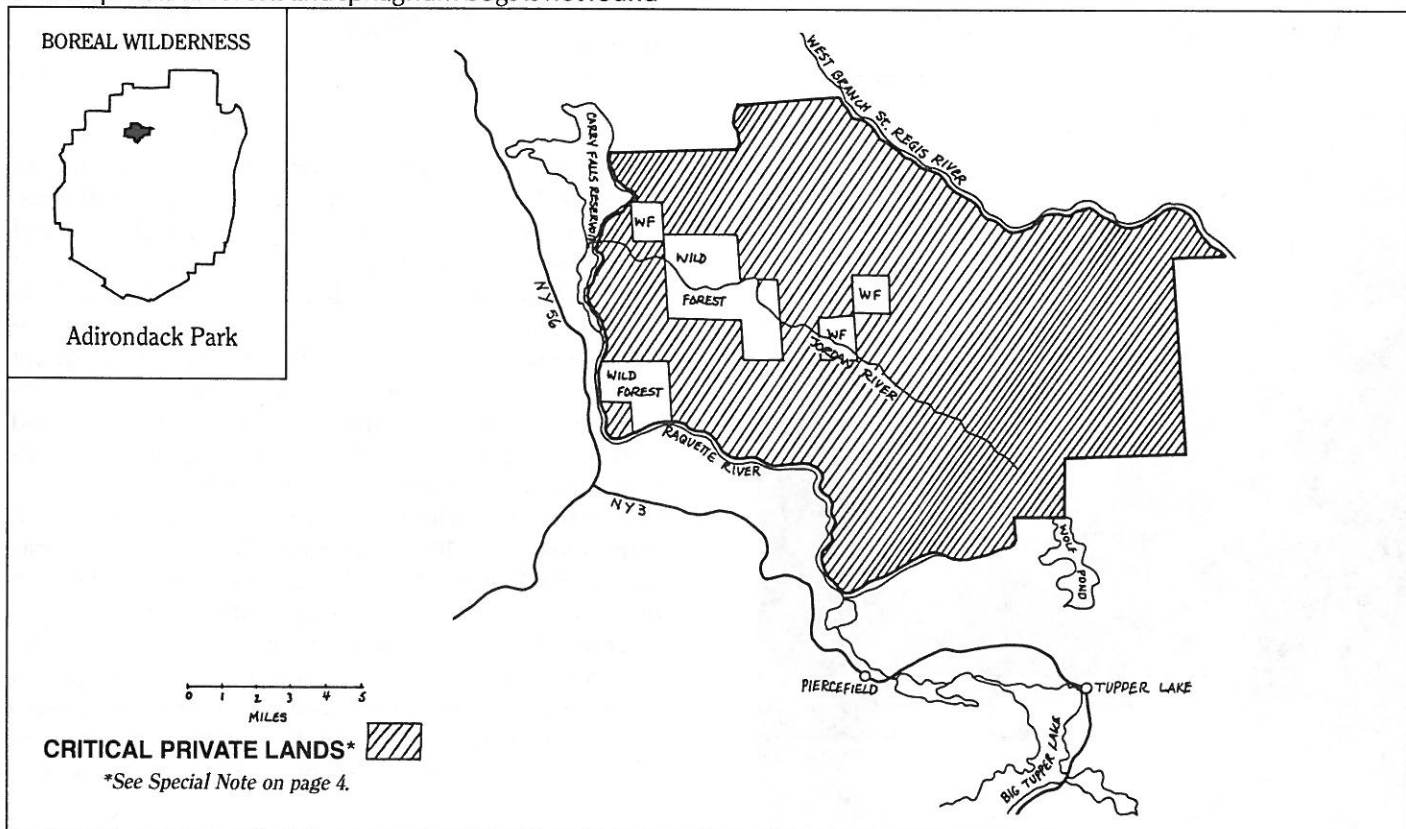
Cary Randorf

Canadian and Siberian taiga (the subarctic evergreen forest) symbolize to many the largest and most remote wilderness on earth. Remnants of these boreal systems persist in the northern Adirondacks. Two distinct islands of boreal vegetation and associated fauna lie within the Adirondack Park: one resulting from high elevation and winds in the High Peaks region, the other shaped by soils and microtopography in the northwest Adirondacks.

In Volume I of 2020 Vision, the Council called for the creation of a Low Elevation Boreal Reserve in southern St. Lawrence and west Franklin counties. Since this extensive area of spruce/fir forests and sphagnum bogs is not found

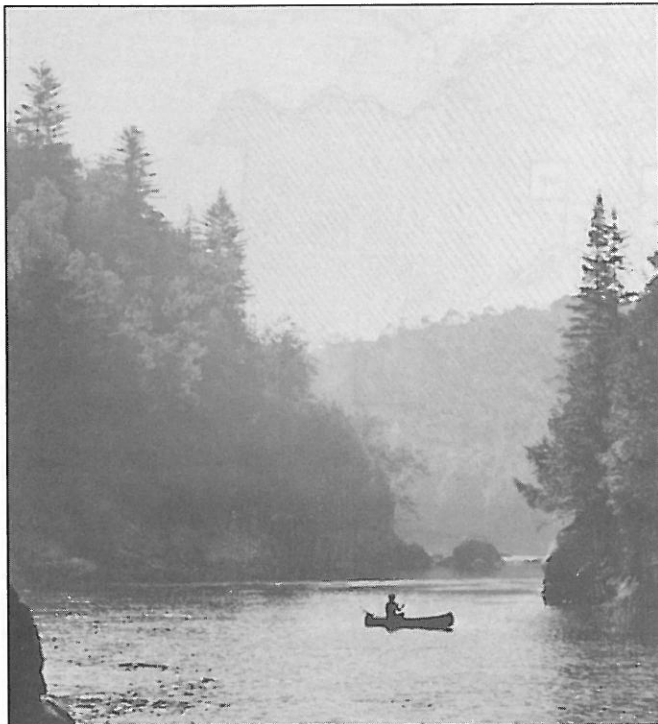
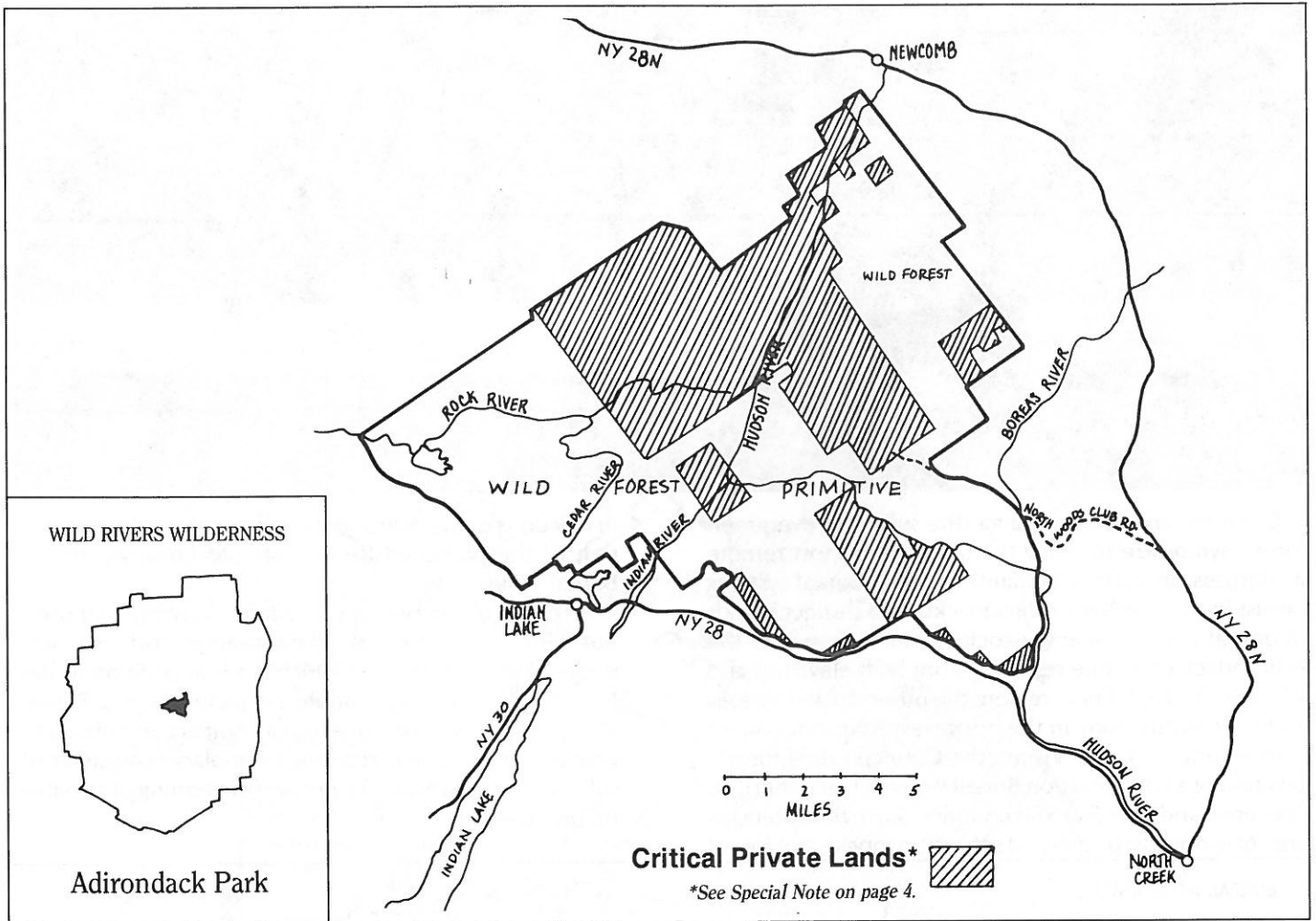
in any units of the Adirondack Wilderness System, a portion of the proposed Reserve should be designated a Boreal Wilderness.

A review of the boreal ecosystems, existing land uses, buffering, and potential administrative problems was undertaken to determine which lands in addition to the Jordan River drainage should be included in a Boreal Wilderness. The goal: to secure a compact and manageable wilderness unit containing exemplary ecosystems of sufficient size to insure the proper functioning of all natural processes.



Proposed Wild Rivers Wilderness

Size: 72,480 Acres



Paul Schaefer

Through the geographic heart of the park run some of the nation's finest wild and scenic rivers: the Boreas, Cedar, Hudson, Indian and Rock. Forty-eight miles of these spectacular waterways, including the magnificent Hudson River Gorge, should form the core of a new Wild Rivers Wilderness. Whether fishing, canoeing, rafting the rivers or hiking the shoreline, the visitor cannot help but feel like an early explorer. Adding to the sense of grandeur and wildness are three dozen pristine lakes and ponds and the dramatic OK Slip Falls, the greatest vertical-drop cataract (over 250 feet) in the park.

To establish a Wild Rivers Wilderness will require the acquisition of 27,310 acres of private land, the reclassification of 28,000 acres of wild forest, and the reclassification of the 17,170-acre Hudson Gorge Primitive Area.

Here, then, is the opportunity to secure a river-dominated wilderness containing the finest in riparian ecosystems and offering the best of wild-river recreation. The opportunity to create such a wilderness exists nowhere else in the nation east of the Rocky Mountains.

SECURING EXISTING WILDERNESS

Blue Ridge Wilderness

Present size: 45,951

Proposed size: 51,851

The six-mile-long, 3,500-foot-high Blue Ridge massif forms the core of this accessible but little-known area in the central Adirondacks. Dense forests are interspersed by nearly two dozen ponds, principally on the north side of the mountain, and spectacular rock faces occur along the southern perimeter. Only nine relatively minor expansions, totaling 5,900 acres, are proposed. Public access and administration will be improved by extending an additional 1.4 miles of the northern wilderness boundary to NY 28, extending much of the southern boundary to the Cedar River Road and the Wakely Mountain trail, and extending much of the western boundary to the Kamp Kill Kare Road. The entire Upper Lake Kora watershed should be included, along with the Lost Brook watershed and the Lake Durant watershed south of the lake.

Ha-De-Ron-Dah Wilderness

Proposed Size: 16,528 Acres

Proposed Size: 33,248 Acres

The terrain consists of low rolling hills with many beaver meadows and swamps. Public access to this wilderness is largely blocked by private lands. The Council recommends that the boundaries be expanded in nine locations, requiring state purchase of 5,880 acres of private land. These extensions would include all of the upper Big Otter Lake watershed (exclusive of the lake itself), 4.2 miles of the Independence River, and the Pine Creek watershed east of the main stem. Much of the southern boundary would extend to NY 28, thus improving public access and administration.

Hoffman Notch Wilderness

Present Size: 36,305 Acres

Proposed Size: 45,266 Acres

This wilderness is characterized by magnificent northern hardwoods and red spruce. Steep slopes and dense forests make travel difficult except on the Hoffman Notch trail. A total of nine private-land acquisitions, totaling 5,160 acres, and four Forest Preserve reclassifications totaling 3,875 acres, would extend the wilderness boundaries to more favorable locations, including a total of 4.6 miles east to the Adirondack Northway and 4.4 miles north to the Boreas/Blue Ridge Road. Also included would be the eastern half of the Minerva Stream drainage basin and the watersheds of Hoffman Notch Brook, Platt Brook, and the east and west branches of Trout Brook.

Giant Mountain Wilderness

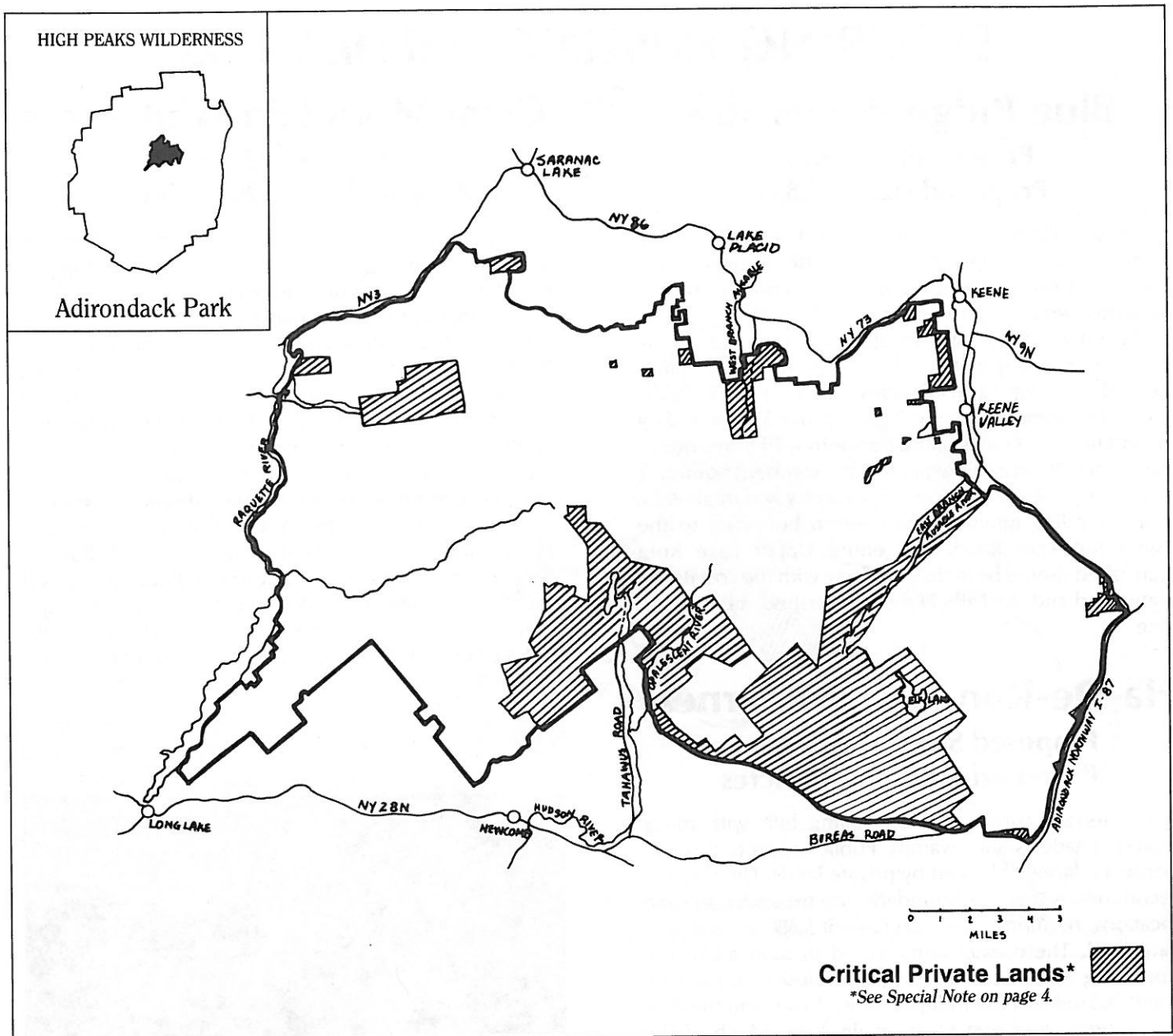
Present Size: 22,916 Acres

Proposed Size: 26,116 Acres

Though one of the smallest units of the system, the Giant Mountain Wilderness embodies the greatest gain in elevation per horizontal mile of any Adirondack wilderness: from 613 feet in Pleasant Valley to 4,627 feet at the summit of Giant Mountain. The alpine summit of Giant, the bedrock spine of Rocky Peak Ridge, and a 200-foot cataract on Roaring Brook, are among the distinctive features of this popular area. Five expansions totaling 3,200 acres are recommended to protect the fragile mountain ecosystems and improve public access and administration. Specifically: the State should incorporate the steep slopes of Bald Peak, Oak Hill, and Iron Mountain and include essentially all of the Slide Brook, Putnam Brook, and Roaring Brook watersheds. Public access will thus be improved from NY 9 and 9N and state management will be facilitated by bringing an additional four miles of boundary to highways or adjacent utility rights-of-way.



Gary Randorf



High Peaks (including Dix Mountain) Wilderness

Present Size: 238,008 Acres
Proposed Size: 314,694 Acres

The High Peaks Wilderness already contains most of the State's highest mountains. If expanded as proposed to include the Dix Mountain Wilderness, this area would encompass 42 of the Adirondack "high peaks" over 4,000 feet.

The range trail from St. Huberts to Mount Marcy traverses New York's most rugged landscape. The Cold River country, once home for the sociable hermit, Noah Rondeau, is one of the wildest watersheds in the East. Yet the High Peaks Wilderness is losing its special sense of remoteness due to heavy and concentrated use. Much of this problem is caused by present boundary locations, private "inholdings," resource limitations, and management difficulties.

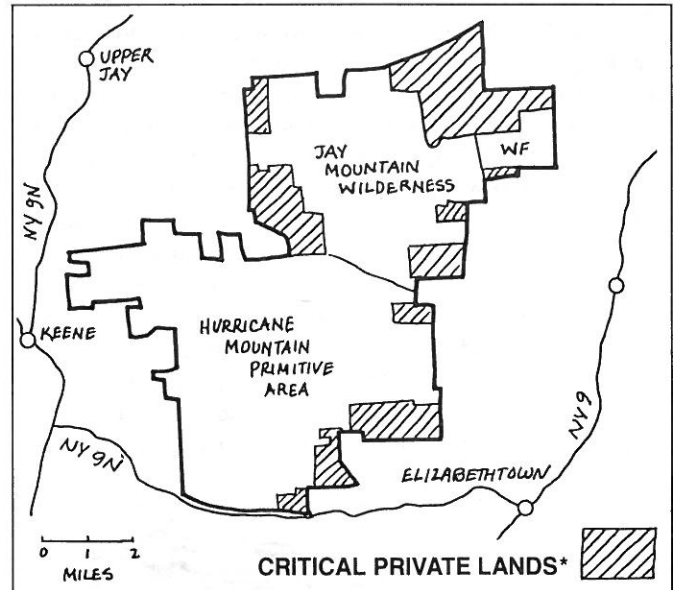
New boundaries should be established to better protect this wilderness, insure its ecological stability, and facilitate enlightened management. Excluding existing communities, the Council proposes that the boundaries be extended to the Adirondack Northway and NY 73 on the east, the Boreas/Blue Ridge Road on the south, and NY 3 and 73 on the north. Specifically: the State should consolidate the High Peaks and Dix Mountain Wilderness; incorporate the Ampersand and Johns Brook Primitive Area; include most of the Opalescent River watershed and all the watersheds of southern Ossetah Lake, Ampersand Brook, Henderson Lake and Calamity Brook, the Boreas Ponds, and the upper East Branch of the Ausable River.

Jay Range-Hurricane Mountain Wilderness

Present Size: Three tracts totaling 21,109 Acres

Proposed Size: One tract totaling 26,309 Acres

Rugged terrain and spectacular views from open, rocky summits characterize the wilderness area that can be established by merging the Jay Mountain Wilderness, Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area, and Mount Fay Wild Forest. Ten private parcels totaling 5,200 acres are recommended for acquisition. Such additions will establish watersheds as the natural ecological components of this wilderness, including "The Glen" and upper Styles Brook, the upper, roadless portion of the Hale Brook watershed, and the watershed of upper Jackson Brook and most of upper Falls Brook. The proposed expansions will bring an additional two miles of the wilderness boundary to public roads, thus improving access and facilitating administration, and encompass the mountain ecosystems of Bluff, Big Lawler and Little Lawler mountains.



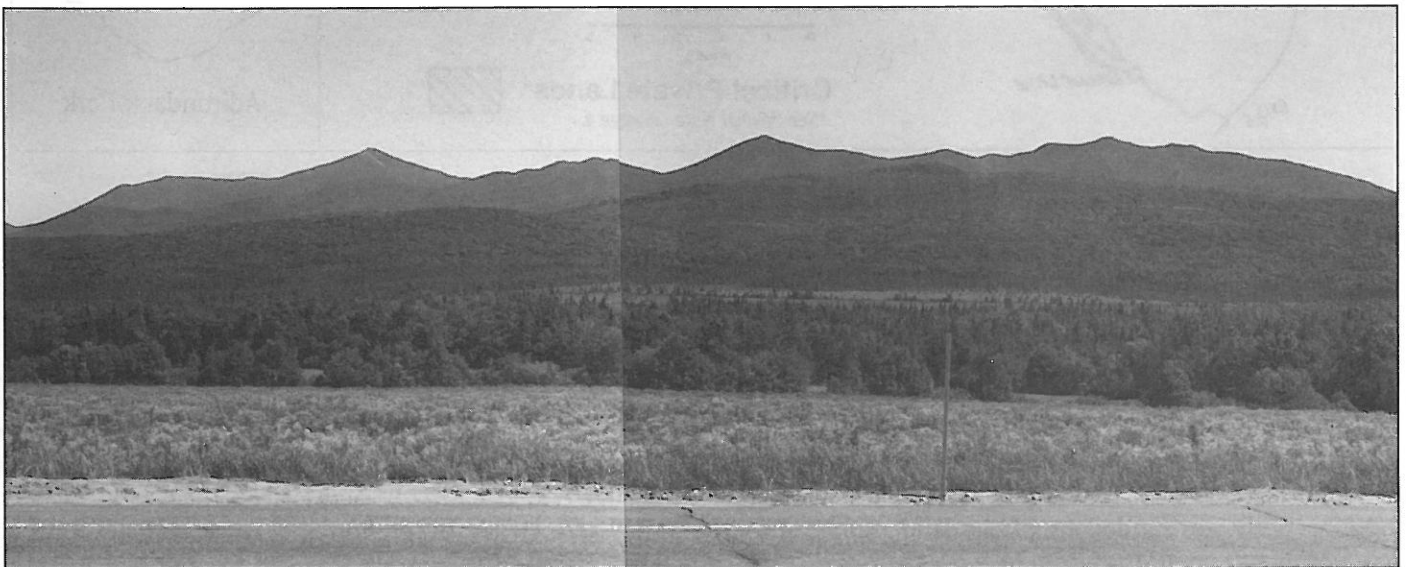
McKenzie Mountain Wilderness

Present Size: 37,798 Acres

Proposed Size: 40,368 Acres

This wilderness centers on a densely-forested massif rising 2,000 feet above the nearby villages of Saranac Lake and Lake Placid — a little-known sanctuary near some of the park's best known natural and manmade attractions. The McKenzie Mountain Wilderness can be perpetuated as a wild refuge with some relatively-small boundary expansions along the Saranac River and the Whiteface Inn road, and immediately behind the developed northwest shoreline of Lake Placid. (The latter boundary expansion

will prevent the kind of mountainside condominium development that would intrude on the wilderness and degrade the scenic splendor and water quality of Lake Placid.) Acquisition of 1,690 acres of private land would incorporate all of the Moose Pond and Moose Creek watershed, increase the Saranac River boundary to 12 uninterrupted miles, improve access to Lincoln Brook, and include High Falls Gorge on the Ausable River.



Alan Cederstrom

St. Regis Canoe Area

Present Size: 23,252 Acres

Proposed Size: 24, 252 Acres

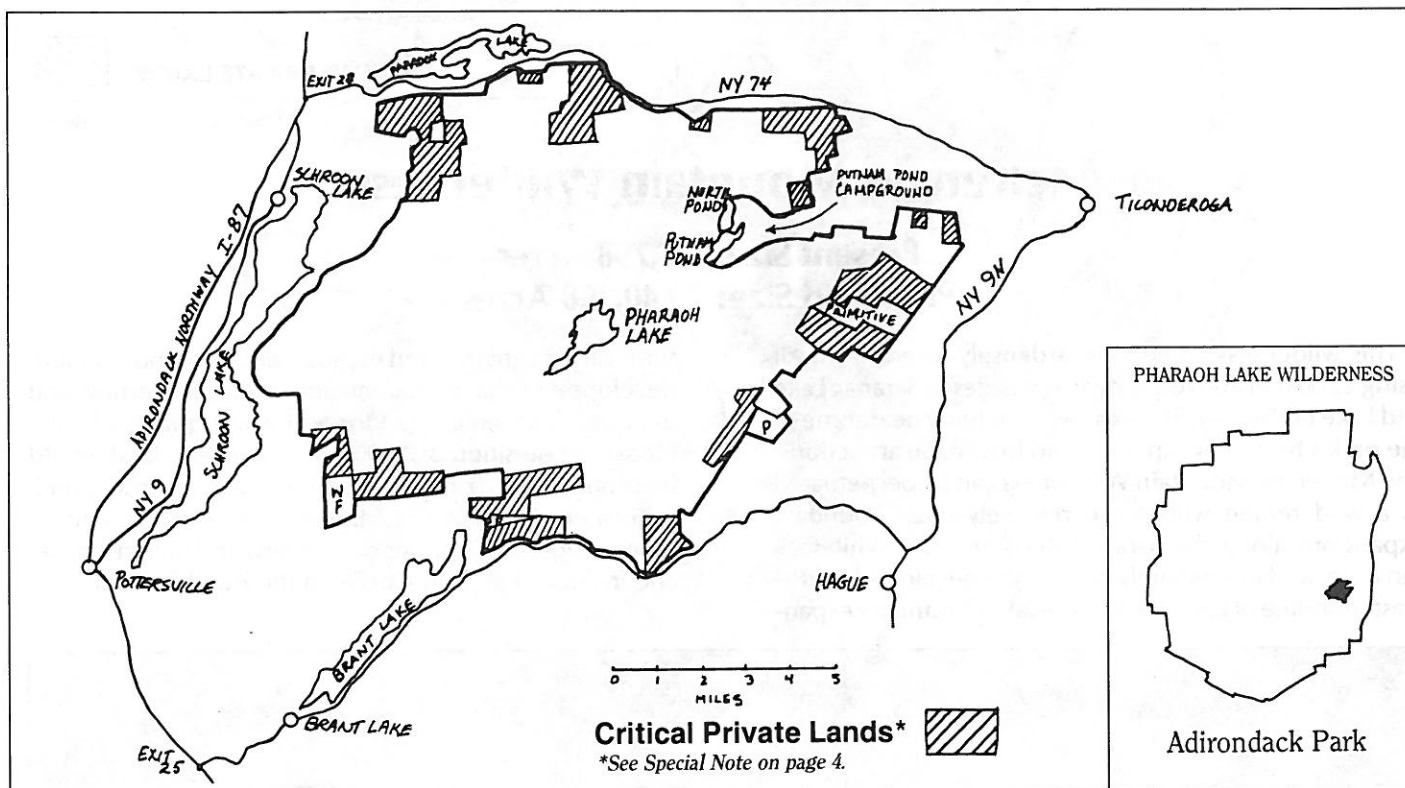
Unsurpassed canoeing and camping is found in the St. Regis Canoe Area, as its steadily-increasing use in the past decade attests. This mostly low, gentle terrain, dominated by St. Regis Mountain to the north and Long Pond Mountain to the west, is also ideal for cross-country skiing. With the recent state acquisition of the bordering Penn Central Railroad right-of-way, the potential exists to expand the Canoe Area to the south and increase its land-and-pond inventory from 58 to 84 bodies of water. Eventual acquisition of only 50 acres of private lands, containing 15 camps, would allow for the closing of the Floodwood Road and the inclusion of more than 7,000 acres of Forest Preserve south of the abandoned railroad and Floodwood Road. To fulfill the promise of the St. Regis Canoe Area, the Council recommends that a total of 860 acres be purchased and 9,020 acres of Forest Preserve be reclassified.

Siamese Ponds Wilderness

Present Size: 113,674 Acres

Proposed Size: 125,574 Acres

Auger Falls, Siamese Ponds, and Puffer Pond . . . the cascades, rock faces and mountain swamps of Eleventh Mountain . . . the East Branch of the Sacandaga and Kungjamuk rivers . . . Burnt Shanty Clearing, Square Falls Mountain, and Bullhead Mountain — such features help to explain the allure of the Siamese Ponds Wilderness. More than 60 lakes and extensive wetlands also add richness and beauty to this land where serenity reigns. The acquisition of 8,800 acres in a dozen locations, and the reclassification of 3,100 acres of Forest Preserve, will bring this wilderness to logical boundaries and fulfill its great promise. The Council recommends extending the southern boundary to the Sacandaga River, Route NY 8 or NY 30, as appropriate, including the eastern shoreline and watershed of Indian Lake and the watershed of Cisco Brook and Owl Pond, Round Pond Brook, Halfway Brook and Bothenation Pond.



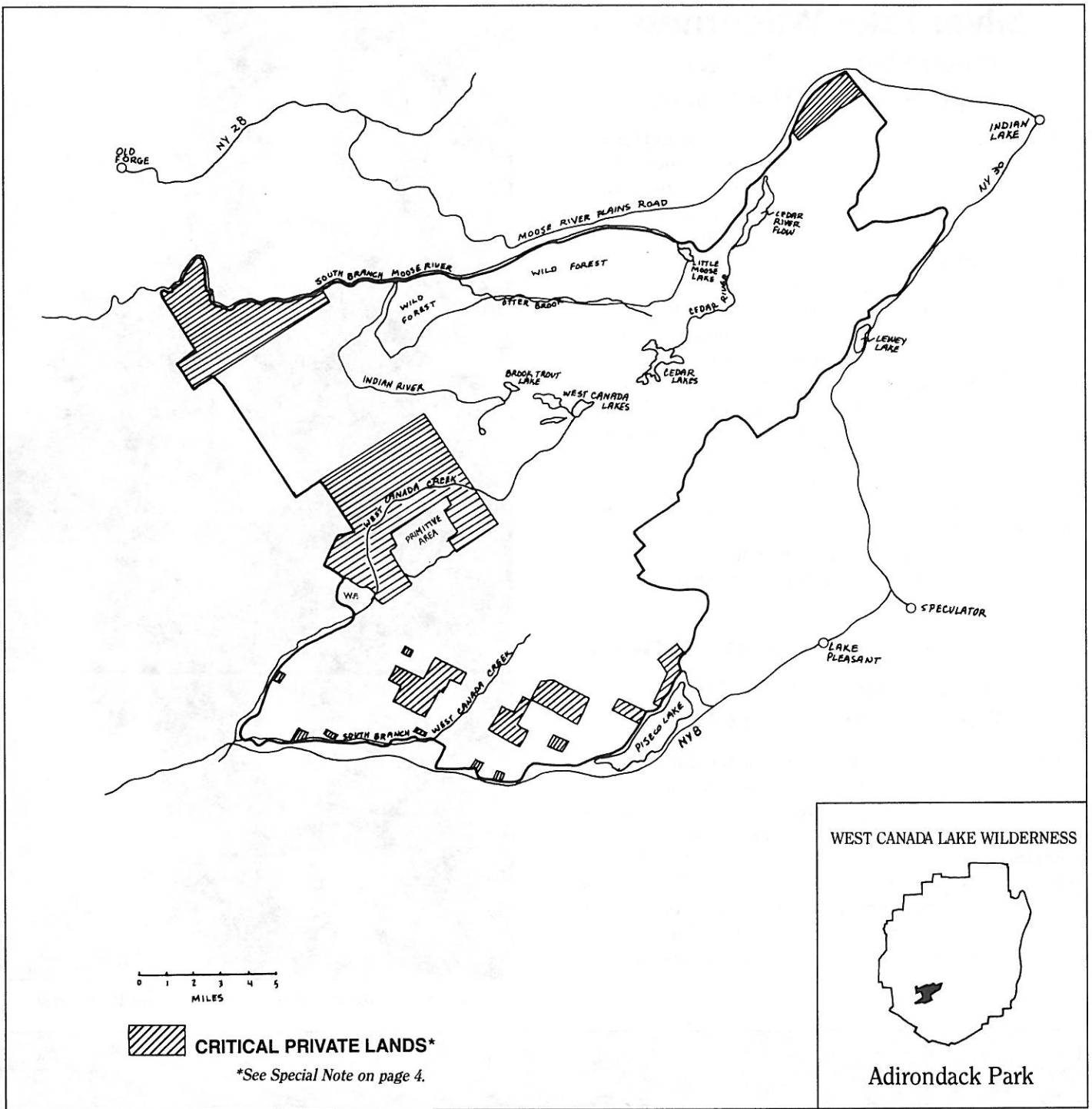
Pharaoh Lake Wilderness

Present Size: 45,884 Acres

Proposed Size: 53,175 Acres

Grizzle Ocean, Desolate Swamp, Devil's Washdish, The Dam Hill, Thunderbolt Mountains and Oxshoe Pond — such are the place names in a wilderness that contains some of the finest landscapes in the Adirondack Park. Pharaoh Lake is one of the largest Adirondack waterbodies entirely surrounded by public land; numerous clear ponds and open vistas from rock outcrops also add

to the appeal. To round out and protect this wilderness, 6,190 acres of private land in 15 locations should be acquired by the State. In addition, the following Forest Preserve tracts should be incorporated: the 500-acre Bald Ledge Primitive Area, 91-acre First Brother Primitive Area, 210-acre Hague Brook Primitive Area, and 300 acres of wild forest.



West Canada Lake Wilderness

Present Size: 169,695 Acres
Proposed Size: 219,150 Acres

Famed as the haunt of French Louis, this is an outstanding wilderness tract in both size and quality. Recent acquisitions in the Perkins Clearing and Little Squaw Brook areas have begun to extend the West Canada Lake Wilderness to ecologically-sound locations. To further enhance and preserve this natural treasure, the Council recommends that all or part of four major watersheds be incorporated, requiring public purchase of 30,180 acres of

private land in 16 locations and the reclassification of 19,275 acres of Forest Preserve. The watershed additions include the southern half of the South Branch of the Moose River, Cedar River upstream from Cedar River Flow, West Canada Creek upstream from the inlet of Honnedaga Brook, and the South Branch of West Canada Creek watershed upstream from the Flow.

Silver Lake Wilderness

Present Size: 105,814 Acres

Proposed Size: 117,010 Acres

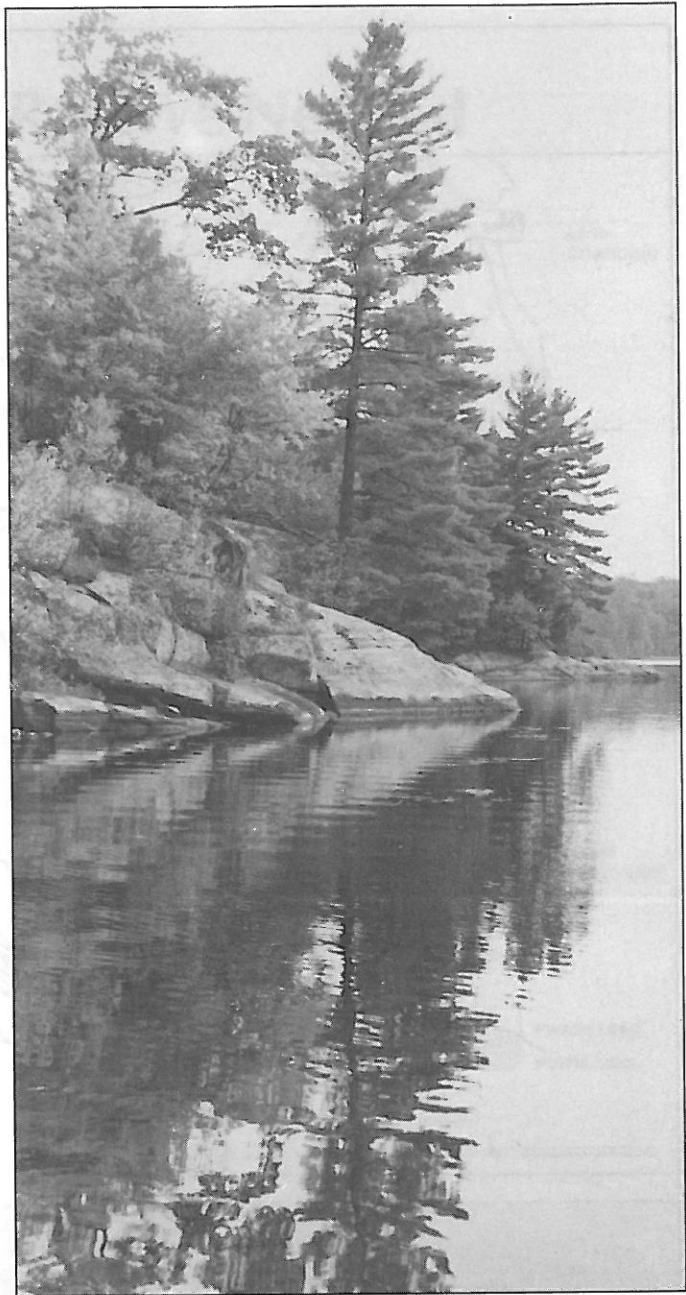
Extensive northern hardwood and mixed-wood forests, from the venerable yellow birch and red spruce on the flank of Three Ponds Mountain to the white pines towering over the West Branch cataracts, typify the Silver Lake Wilderness. With more than 100,000 geographically-compact acres, the Silver Lake Wilderness could be one of the most ecologically significant sanctuaries in the United States — when the upper six miles of the West River Road, a gravel motorway that now penetrates the area, is closed. Such action will require acquisition of about 785 acres of private land, involving some 15 hunting camps and the closure of a road long popular with hunters. Such a purchase must be undertaken over a reasonable period of time, with understanding and sensitivity shown to present users and with a sincere effort to provide alternative motorized hunting access by means of an aggressive conservation easement program. The Council proposes an expansion of 11,196 acres, including acquisition of 8,480 acres of private land with multiple ownerships.

Sentinel Range Wilderness

Present Size: 23,252 Acres

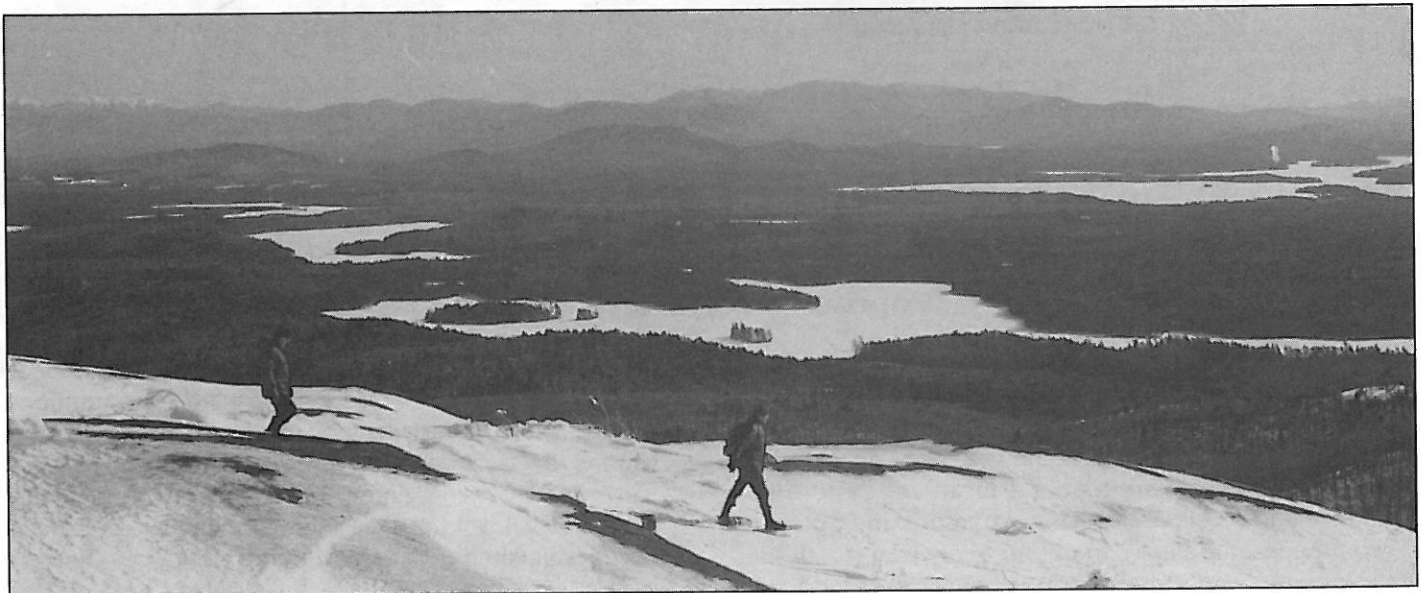
Proposed Size: 24,252 Acres

A small, rugged wilderness sandwiched between the hamlet of Keene and Wilmington Notch, the Sentinel Range offers a surprising degree of seclusion. Only the Copperas-Owen-Winch Pond section, just above Wilmington Notch, and the Military Road north of Pitchoff Mountain, get significant recreational use. The interior remains a wild, little-known mountain-ecosystem reserve. The Council recommends that 1,780 acres of private land be acquired and added to the wilderness to preserve the area's natural integrity.

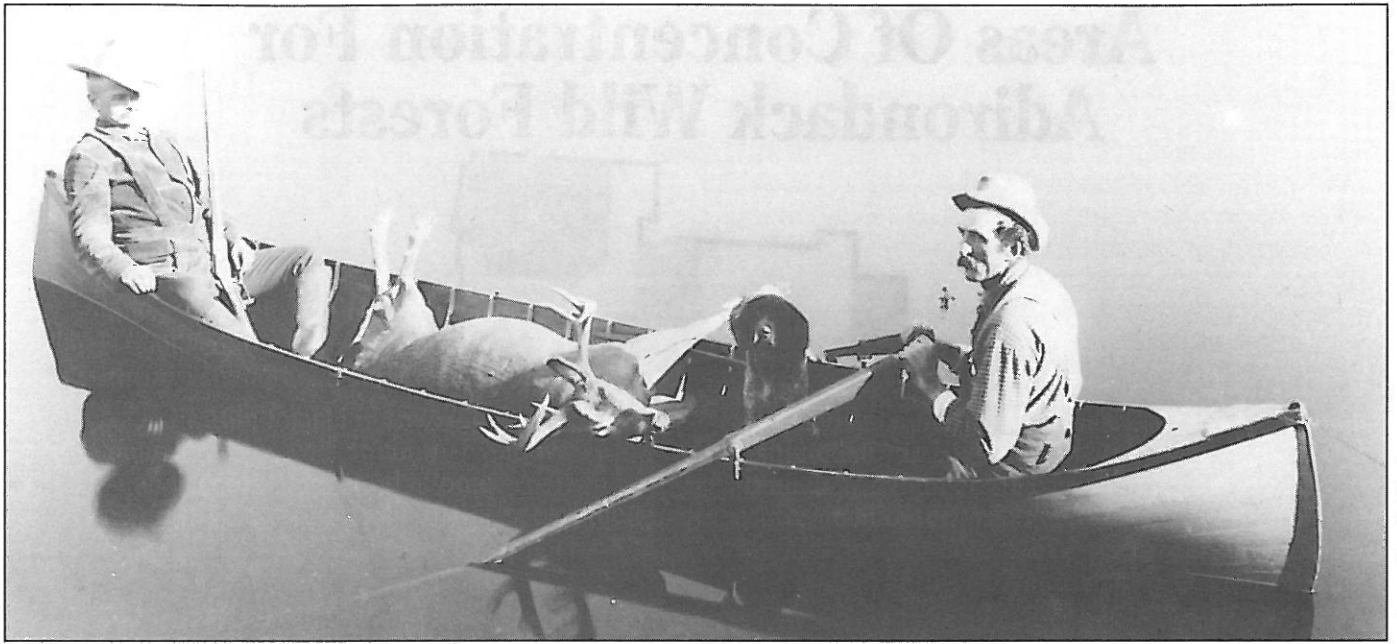


Barbara McMartin

Sacandaga Lake shoreline in the Jessup River Wild Forest.



Gary Randorf



Seneca Ray Stoddard

VOLUME THREE: Realizing the Recreational Potential of Adirondack Wild Forests

Wild Forests of the Adirondacks, which currently comprise about half the state-owned Adirondack Forest Preserve, offer some of the best outdoor recreation opportunities in the eastern United States.

The Adirondack Council will soon release a 52-page report mapping and describing the Wild Forests of the Adirondack Park and recommending how these many scattered, state-owned parcels can be protected, enhanced and managed to achieve their full recreational potential.

"Realizing the Recreational Potential of Adirondack Wild Forests" was prepared for the Council by Barbara McMartin, a noted Adirondack historian, recreational planner and guidebook author. Intended as a blueprint for state policymakers, this is the third in a series of 2020 Vision studies designed to insure the preservation and ecological integrity of the Adirondack Park for the year 2020 and beyond.

Most of the publicly owned Forest Preserve is classified either as Wild Forest, where motorized recreation is permitted in designated places, or as Wilderness, where no motorized recreation is allowed. The State Land Master Plan of 1972 is very specific about the purpose of Wilderness (generally the more remote and least trammled lands of the Forest Preserve) but it barely hints at the ways Wild Forest areas should be utilized.

Putting People in the Woods

The Council's study seeks to fill that void with a recreation and acquisition plan that puts people in the woods and on the waters in a way that preserves the

resource and is consistent with the "forever wild" stipulation of the State Constitution. The Council has identified 255,190 acres of private land that should be purchased by the State to complete the Wild Forest System.

"The people of New York own tracts of Wild Forest as undisturbed as any solitary hiker could desire," the Council notes. "Other Wild Forest tracts are laced with gravelly old roads, enticing horseback riders and those who favor motorized recreation. Wild Forest abounds with small lakes and ponds, wooded hills, and ranges of open rock summits affording marvelous views. Yet only a few blocks of Wild Forest have been given adequate consideration for other than motorized recreation."

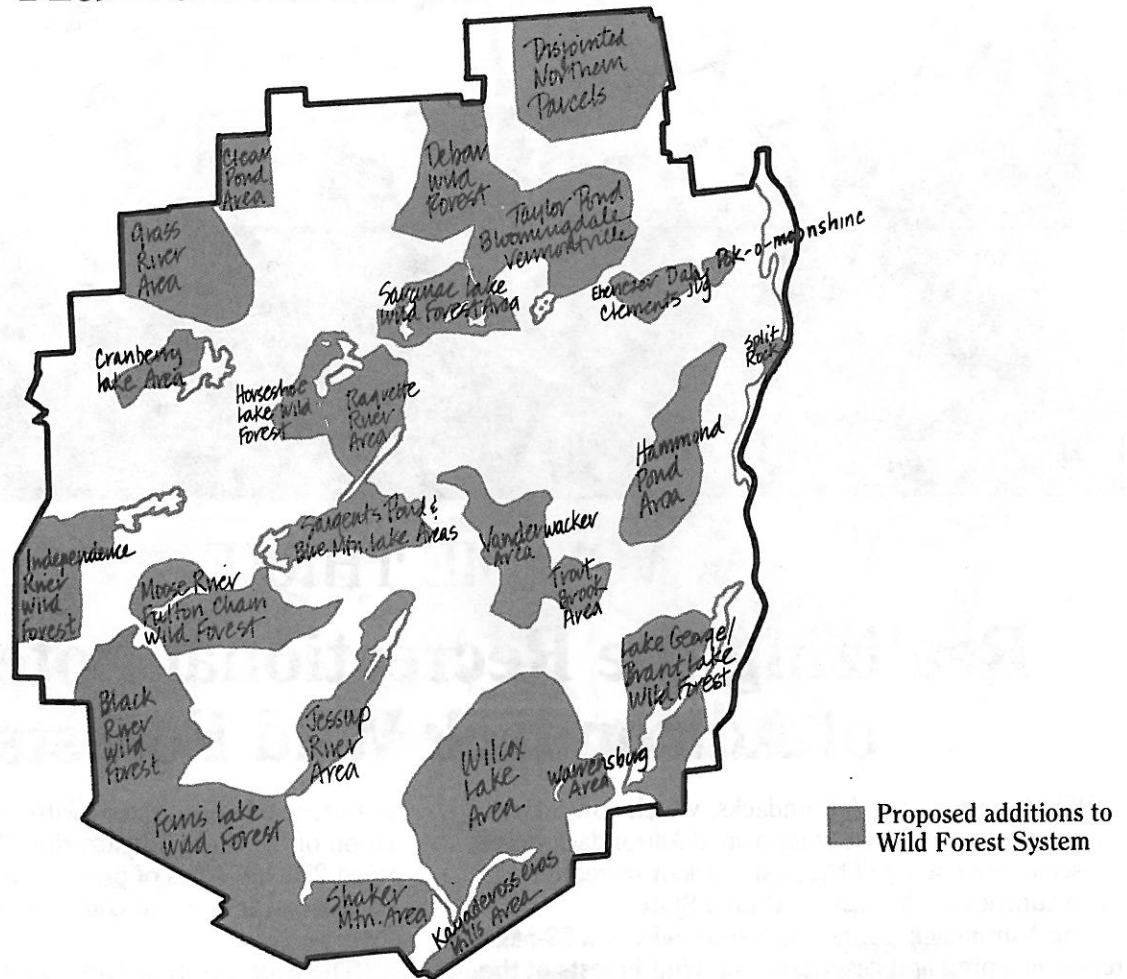
Poorly Maintained

The State has done much to promote hunting in the Forest Preserve and to enhance fishing through reclamation and stocking of ponds and streams. A number of fishing access sites have been acquired and new boat access sites, most accommodating motorboats, have been provided.

"But other forms of recreation cry out for attention," the report reveals. For example, "many of the old logging roads that became snowmobile trails attract hikers and sportsmen year round, but these routes are poorly maintained. Much of the State's budget for trail maintenance has, in response to legitimate needs, been concentrated in the High Peaks region, while less fragile summits in Wild Forests have been neglected."

"In much of the Wild Forest there remains an overall

Areas Of Concentration For Adirondack Wild Forests



■ Proposed additions to Wild Forest System

The Eastern Adirondacks

	Additional Acres Needed
Kayaderosseras Hills Wild Forest	11,880
Wilcox Lake Wild Forest	13,280
Lake George Wild Forest	8,560
Warrensburg Wild Forest	4,320
Hammond Pond Wild Forest	11,440
Trout Brook Wild Forest	7,720
Split Rock Wild Forest	4,880
Pok-o-moonshine Wild Forest	3,660
Daby, Jug and the Gulf Wild Forest	7,760
Ebenezer and Rattlesnake Wild Forest	1,360
Clements Mountain Wild Forest	880

The South-Central Adirondacks

Shaker Mountain Wild Forest	7,100
Ferris Lake Wild Forest	7,480
Jessup River Wild Forest	2,000
Blue Mountain Wild Forest	2,300
Sargent Ponds Wild Forest	2,120
Vanderwacker and Upper Hudson Wild Forest	7,480

The North-Central Adirondacks

Saranac Lakes Wild Forest	600
Horseshoe Lake Wild Forest	10,200
Raquette River Wild Forest	60,000
Debar Mountain Wild Forest	7,000
Taylor Pond Wild Forest	4,400
Bloomingdale Bog and Vermontville Wild Forests	7,920
Disjointed Northern Parcels	8,300

The Northwestern Adirondacks

Cranberry Lake and Tooley Pond Wild Forest	19,280
Grass River Wild Forest	4,000
Stone Dam Wild Forest	50
Chandler Pond Wild Forest	4,000
Clear Pond Wild Forest	140

The Western Adirondacks

Black River Wild Forest	12,560
Independence River Wild Forest	2,000
Fulton Chain Wild Forest	14,720
Moose River Plains Wild Forest	200

WILD FOREST *continued*

shortage of marked foot trails to mountain tops, lakes, ponds, waterfalls and other good destinations. Along with the hunter, trapper, fisherman, and snowmobiler, more consideration should now be given the hiker, camper, picnicker, swimmer, boater, canoer, and family on outings.”

Good stewardship and wise management of Wild Forests should, the Council recommends, include marking new trails, creating marked footpaths (requiring lit-



Barbara McMartin, author of the Wild Forest report, in the Hammond Pond Wild Forest.

tle maintenance), and building lean-tos and trailhead parking. In addition, the State should make sure that snowmobile trails attract different kinds of use in warmer seasons; mark little-used snowmobile trails for cross-country skiers and advertise their availability; create primitive campsites; harden some existing trails for ease of access and build some trails, on suitable terrain, for handicapped access.

Roads a Blessing

Wild Forests tend to have many more jeep trails and old woods roads than does Wilderness. While roads are incompatible with Wilderness, they are one of the blessings of Wild Forests because they provide easier public access and additional recreation opportunities.

To realize the potential of Wild Forest areas requires a different approach from completing the Wilderness System as advocated by the Council in Volume 2 of 2020 Vision. Instead of rounding out and filling in all Wild Forests to the best natural or management boundaries, as the Council has proposed for Wilderness, it is often advantageous to leave the mosaic of Wild Forest and private lands, especially where trespass problems can be controlled.

The existing road network can be most helpful to families seeking short routes to mountains and lakes, for hunters whose travels from roadsides are limited by the distance they can carry big game, and for the growing number of people who seek well-marked trails for quiet recreation. The latter group often includes those who are older and less physically adept — a group that has seldom been the object of recreation planning in the Adirondacks.

Access a Priority

In Volume 2 of 2020, the Council identified many large private holdings that should be acquired by the State to complete the Adirondack Wilderness System. But only a few large private tracts are necessary additions to the Wild Forest System. In fact, the bulk of the big corporate holdings are best protected under conservation easements, where the land remains in private ownership and present open-space uses, such as logging and private recreational preserves, may continue.

Several desirable additions to Wild Forest are smaller private preserves where public acquisition would disrupt the families who have owned these tracts for generations. Such lands should be protected from further development by means of conservation easements, and added to the Forest Preserve only when owners wish to sell. The acquisitions proposed by the Council usually involve only access easements across such lands to currently isolated blocks of Wild Forest.

In many Wild Forest areas, most or all of the surrounding road network is on private land, thus preventing access to the public holdings. Access easements should be acquired by the State whenever such access will facilitate public use and enjoyment of the Wild Forest. Where the public has been granted access by private landowners, easements should be acquired to guarantee such access in perpetuity.

Among 32 Wild Forests Studied by the Council

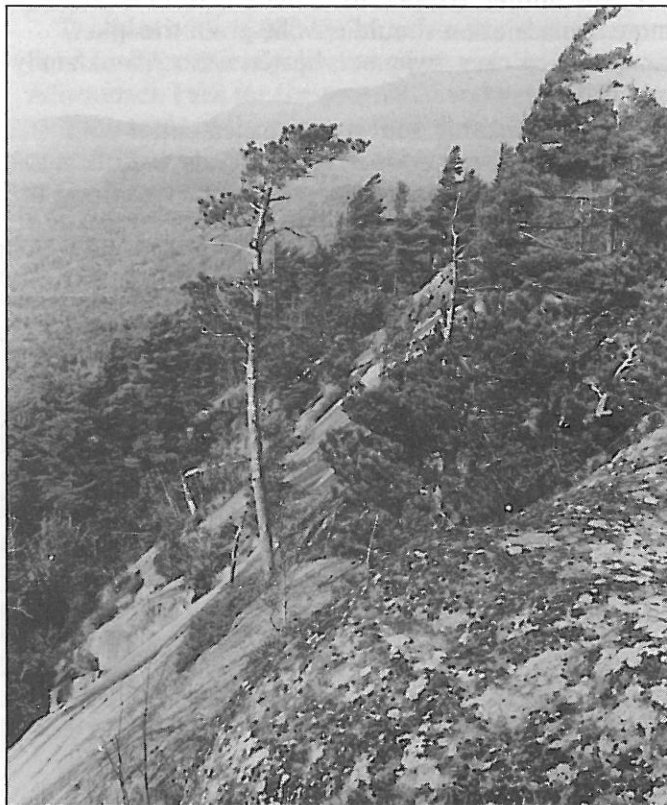
Wilcox Lake Wild Forest: *One of the Park's Best Kept Secrets*

Few areas in the park have the potential for hiking, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing as does the Wilcox Lake Wild Forest. Larger than most Wilderness areas, close to the capital district, and containing an exceptional array of forest types and recreational opportunities, this could be a premier recreation area.

Spectacular mountains, only two with trails, line the eastern boundary of the Wild Forest. All these fire-scarred open peaks are small, but they rise over 2,000 feet above the Hudson Valley, offering distant views to the High Peaks, Vermont, and the Sacandaga Valley.

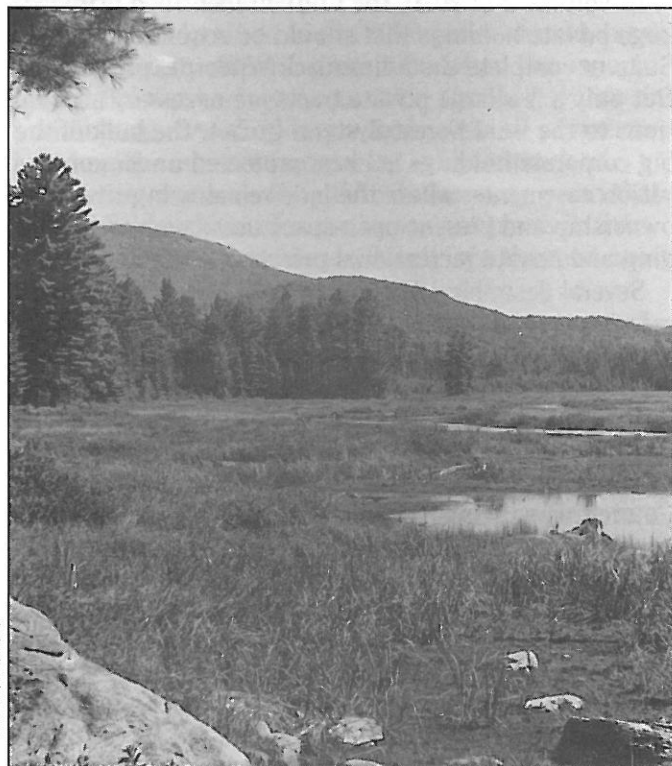
Penetrating roads kept the Wilcox Lake area from Wilderness status. The State should now capitalize on these roads to create the park's most important and accessible recreation area by connecting the long flat trails to a network that joins the open peaks. Needed are a limited amount of public land acquisition, new trailhead and parking facilities, construction of three lean-tos, trails to the open peaks with connecting trails between, and a bit of publicity.

Some 60 miles of hiking and snowmobiling trails along old roads trace the area's historical development. An additional 30 miles of trails will add loops to the network for cross-country skiers and to the open peaks for hikers. Trails to Tenant Creek's three waterfalls and along Stony Creek invite backpackers and long distance skiers. Few other Wild Forest areas are large enough for such long trails as the 25-mile route connecting the hamlet of Hope Falls with the Oregon trailhead.



Barbara McMartin

The view west on Huckleberry Mountain in the Wilcox Lake Wild Forest.



Barbara McMartin

Madison Creek Flow.

Completion of the trail systems and acquisition of 13,280 acres of Forest Preserve in a dozen parcels would:

- Provide trails for day hikes to Rand and Moose mountains on the west side of the Wild Forest and Huckleberry, Baldhead and Moose, Roundtop, and Bearpen mountains and Mount Blue on the east; and provide loop trails between the eastern cluster and the region's other open peaks, Hadley and Crane;
- Allow for the continuation of inholdings at Moosewood Club, Fuller's, and Brownell's Camp, as long as there is access to trails through these properties and trespass problems along them are controlled; limit development of the inholdings and acquire them as they become available;
- Connect the existing snowmobile trails between the Oregon and Bartman trailheads; add trails between Hope Falls and Northville and between the Stony Creek valley and town roads north of the Great Sacandaga Lake;
- Incorporate the Tenant Creek drainage in the Forest Preserve;
- Improve public access to Garnet Lake, Lens Lake, Mud Pond, Middle Flow, and both Upper and Lower Tenant Creek Falls;
- Permit public access to Wolf Pond caves;

- Establish new trailheads at Crystal Brook, Garnet Lake, Paintbed Brook, and Putnam Farm;
- Create loop trails for cross-country skiing through the Jimmy Creek and Crystal Creek-Painted Brook valleys, through the vleys west of Spruce and Cattle mountains, and between the Willis Lake trail and the Stony Creek network;
- Establish nature trails along Wolf Creek, on Moose Mountain, and near Madison Creek Flow, and a canoe-nature trail on Lens Lake;
- Preserve access by road to Harrisburg Lake, Baldwin Springs, and Brownell's Camp;
- Secure an easement over the shortest route to Pine Orchard and consider building a nature trail here for handicapped access to the most impressive stand of old-growth pines in the Adirondacks.

Copies of the full 52-page report on the Adirondack Wild Forest System may be ordered from the Adirondack Council, Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932. To cover production and mailing costs, a donation of \$10 per copy is requested.

Wild Forest Scorecard

Present Wild Forest (1990):	1,355,000 Acres
Proposed Wild Forest Additions:	255,190 Acres
Proposed Wild Forest to Wilderness:	173,000 Acres
Net Gain in Wild Forest:	82,190 Acres
Total Proposed Wild Forest:	1,437,190 Acres



Paddling Fall Stream in the Jessup River Wild Forest.



Barbara McMartin

Backroads like the Powley-Piseco Road in the Ferris Lake Wild Forest provide unlimited opportunities for scenic excursions.

DEFINITIONS

Adirondack Park: Created in 1892 by the New York State Legislature, this largest of all parks in the Lower 48 States contains six million acres of intermixed public and private land. About 58% of the park is privately owned and devoted mainly to forestry, open-space recreation, and agriculture.

Adirondack Forest Preserve: The state-owned land in the Adirondack Park is designated as Forest Preserve and protected by the State Constitution as "forever wild." The hundreds of parcels of Forest Preserve add up to about 2,600,000 acres or 42% of the park.

Adirondack Wilderness System: This category of public Adirondack Forest Preserve totals 1,038,874 acres — about 40% of the state-owned

land and one-sixth of the entire park. The Adirondack Wilderness System consists generally of the wilder, more remote portions of the Forest Preserve — "those areas where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Adirondack Wild Forest System: This category currently comprises about 54% of all state-owned land in the park. The resources in these areas permit a higher degree of human use than in Wilderness. Yet many Wild Forest areas are less known, and receive less use, than some Wilderness areas. The Adirondack Wild Forest System represents one of the nation's finest and least-utilized recreation resources.

The Adirondack Council

Founded in 1975, the Adirondack Council is an active not-for-profit organization dedicated to protecting the natural and open-space character of the Adirondack Park through public education, interaction with government agencies and lawmakers, and legal action when necessary.

The Council receives moral and financial sustenance from its 18,000 individual members and from private foundations.

Individual memberships begin at \$25. Membership benefits include regular newsletters, special reports, and action alerts.

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