

2020 VISION

FULFILLING THE PROMISE OF THE ADIRONDACK PARK



VOLUME 2

Completing The Adirondack Wilderness System

The Adirondack Council



Harold A. Jerry, Jr.



Clarence A. Petty

This volume would not have been possible without years of tutoring from Harold Jerry and Clarence Petty. Harold Jerry first served the State as a senator and later as a troubleshooter for Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller in the fields of planning and conservation. As executive director of the Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks, he was instrumental in securing the Governor's support for an Adirondack Wilderness System.

Clarence Petty probably knows the Adirondack Forest Preserve better than anyone, having served as Forest Preserve specialist for the NYS Conservation Department, Joint Legislative Committee on Natural Resources, Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks, and the Adirondack Park Agency. It was Clarence who took me far and wide through the Preserve to evaluate its wilderness potential for the Study Commission.

I am deeply indebted to them both.

George D. Davis

Acknowledgements

The Adirondack Council is grateful for the timely generosity of the **Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation** in providing the initial funding needed to undertake Volume II of 2020 VISION. In addition, the Council is indebted to other foundation contributors who helped underwrite this project through their support of the CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE ADIRONDACK PARK. These include **American Conservation Association, Inc., Alpin J. and Alpin W. Cameron Memorial Fund, Saul Z. and Amy Scheuer Cohen Family Foundation, Inc., Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Inc., The Charles Engelhard Foundation, The J.M. Kaplan Fund, The Prospect Hill Foundation, Inc., The Florence and John Schumann Foundation, Town Creek Foundation, and Unity Avenue Foundation.**

We are also pleased to acknowledge the generous support of **John F. Dietel, Lisa R. Dietel, Victoria Dietel Hopps, Cyndy Dietel Krieger, Carolyn A. Robinson and Elizabeth Dietel Sands.** These individuals provided contributions for the 2020 VISION project in memory of their beloved grandmother, Carolyn Lyon Remington, and her great love for the Adirondacks.

A generous grant from **REI (Recreational Equipment, Inc.)** helped underwrite the printing of Volume II.

Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number
88-71875

ISBN 0-9621202-0-0 (Volume 1)
ISBN 0-9621202-1-9 (Volume 2)
ISBN 0-9621202-6-X (6 Volume Set)

Maps by Sheri Amsel

Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
DEFINITIONS	6
RECOMMENDATIONS	7
THE ADIRONDACK PARK	8
THE ADIRONDACK FOREST PRESERVE	9
THE ADIRONDACK WILDERNESS SYSTEM	10
NEW WILDERNESS PROPOSALS	
Bob Marshall Great Wilderness	12
Boreal Wilderness	16
Wild Rivers Wilderness	18
SECURING EXISTING WILDERNESS	
Blue Ridge Wilderness	19
Giant Mountain Wilderness	20
Ha-de-ron-dah Wilderness	21
High Peaks Wilderness	22
Hoffman Notch Wilderness	24
Jay Range-Hurricane Mountain Wilderness	27
McKenzie Mountain Wilderness	28
Pharoah Lake Wilderness	30
St. Regis Canoe Area	31
Sentinel Range Wilderness	33
Siamese Ponds Wilderness	34
Silver Lake Wilderness	36
West Canada Lake Wilderness	38
APPENDIX A: Current Adirondack Forest Preserve Classifications	41
APPENDIX B: Summary of Existing and Proposed Wilderness	42
APPENDIX C: Boundary Descriptions for Bob Marshall Great Wilderness	43



Mike Stacey

A wilderness . . . is hereby recognized 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.

National Wilderness Preservation Act, 1964

Introduction

The people of New York State still have the opportunity to secure the finest wilderness legacy east of the Mississippi River — if decisive, intelligent, far-sighted action is taken *immediately*. In this most populous of eastern states, we still have the astounding opportunity to establish three new state-owned Wilderness Areas in the Adirondack Park and to round out 13 other tracts currently designated as Wilderness.

In the first report of its 2020 VISION series, 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 Adirondack lands designated as Wild Forest.

In this, the second of the 2020 VISION studies, the Council recommends that the Adirondack Wilderness system be enlarged from 1,038,874 to 1,659,694 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.

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 (or development rights) 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 properties, 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 established. Where hunting camps might be displaced and motorized access precluded, the State should provide comparable hunting opportunities by means of an aggressive conservation-easement program.

The power of eminent domain, also known as condemnation or the taking of private land by government (at fair market value) for an important public purpose, 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 set forth in this study will be a test of this generation's foresight.

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

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

Definitions

Adirondack Park: Created in 1892 by the New York State Legislature, the park today consists of six million acres of intermixed public and private land.

Adirondack Forest Preserve: Most of the state-owned land in the Adirondack park is "Forest Preserve," protected as "forever wild" by Article XIV of the State Constitution. 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 primary function of Wilderness designation is to preserve natural biological systems. The preservation of natural beauty — and the opportunities for human recreation in an unparalleled natural setting — are other important benefits. Motorized recreation is not allowed in Wilderness.

In contrast to those areas where man and his works dominate, Wilderness is defined by the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (and the National Wilderness Preservation Act) 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.

The Adirondack Wilderness System represents over 90% of all designated Wilderness in the 12 northeastern states.

Primitive Areas: This category includes areas essentially Wilderness in character except for size, location or present human structures or uses. Many of these areas can be upgraded to Wilderness when the non-conforming uses are removed or discontinued, or acquisition of adjoining private tracts is accomplished.

Wild Forest: This category currently comprises about 54% of all public land in the Adirondack Park. The resources in these areas permit a higher degree of human use than in Wilderness or Primitive areas, while retaining an essentially wild character. A Wild Forest frequently lacks the sense of remoteness of the other two categories. Motorized uses are permitted on designated waters, roads and trails.

Ecology: The study of the interrelationships between living things and their environment. This involves plants, animals, soils, climate and chemistry. An ecosystem is a community and its environment treated together, including all the interactions of its members.

Recommendations

To secure and complete the Adirondack Wilderness System, the State of New York must 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 reclassifying Wild Forest to Wilderness, the State must provide comparable access elsewhere.

Specific recommendations:

1) Bob Marshall Great Wilderness: 408,777 acres

This new wilderness area can be achieved 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 River and north of the Everglades. (See page 12.)

2) 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 new wilderness through the consolidation of public lands and the acquisition of private lands. (See page 16.)

3) Wild Rivers Wilderness: 72,480 acres

The greatest concentration of wild and scenic rivers in the eastern United States can be preserved in this new wilderness through the consolidation of public lands and the acquisition of private lands. (See page 18.)

4) Round out and Protect Existing Wilderness

By consolidating public lands and acquiring 142,696 acres of private land, the State can expand present wilderness to more rational ecological and administrative boundaries, thus safeguarding these rare and fragile natural treasures for all time.



Gary Binkert

The Adirondack Park

The Adirondack Park is the largest American 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.

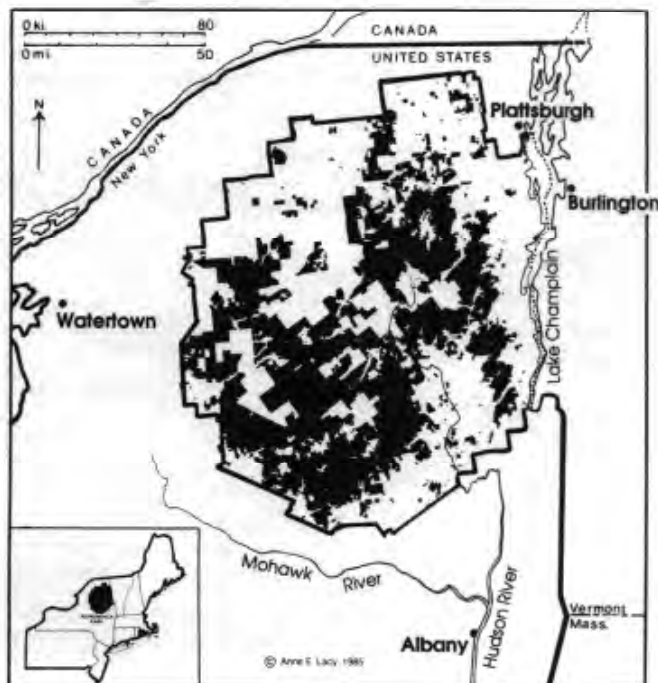
Some 42 percent of the Adirondack Park is publicly-owned Forest Preserve, protected as "forever wild" by the state constitution since 1895. One million acres of these public lands, representing one-sixth of the entire park, is further designated as Wilderness, where a wide range of non-motorized recreation may be enjoyed in an incomparable natural setting.

The remaining 58 percent of the Adirondack Park is private land devoted principally to forestry, agriculture and open-space recreation. The park is home for 120,000 permanent and 210,000 seasonal residents, and hosts an estimated nine million visitors annually.

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, nine with alpine summits.

The Adirondacks form the headwaters for most or part 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 1,000 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 in the year 2020 and beyond that will serve as a global model for land use and conservation. The Adirondack Park in the year 2020 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.



The Adirondack Park is a patchwork of public (black) and private lands.

The Adirondack Forest Preserve

The lands of the state, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the forest preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold, or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed, or destroyed.

Article XIV, New York State Constitution

Long before it became fashionable to set aside public parks, reserves and similar sanctuaries for preservation purposes, New York State pioneered in this field by creating the "forever wild" State Forest Preserve.

Established in 1885, the Adirondack Forest Preserve has always provided for a wide range of recreational uses consistent with a wild forest setting. As both technology and leisure time have expanded, however, recreational conflicts have arisen in the Preserve, primarily between motorized and non-motorized users. In the 1950s, conflicts began between jeep users and hikers, both intent on enjoying the same backcountry roads. In the 1960s, tensions developed between cross-country skiers and snowshoers on the one hand, and snowmobilers on the other. Canoeers in search of wilderness tranquility clashed with motorboaters seeking greater speed and convenience. Visitors arriving by floatplane competed with hikers and canoeers for prime campsites on backcountry lakes. The need to preserve the natural serenity became increasingly important to increasing numbers of recreationists, while the demand for motorized recreational use also grew.

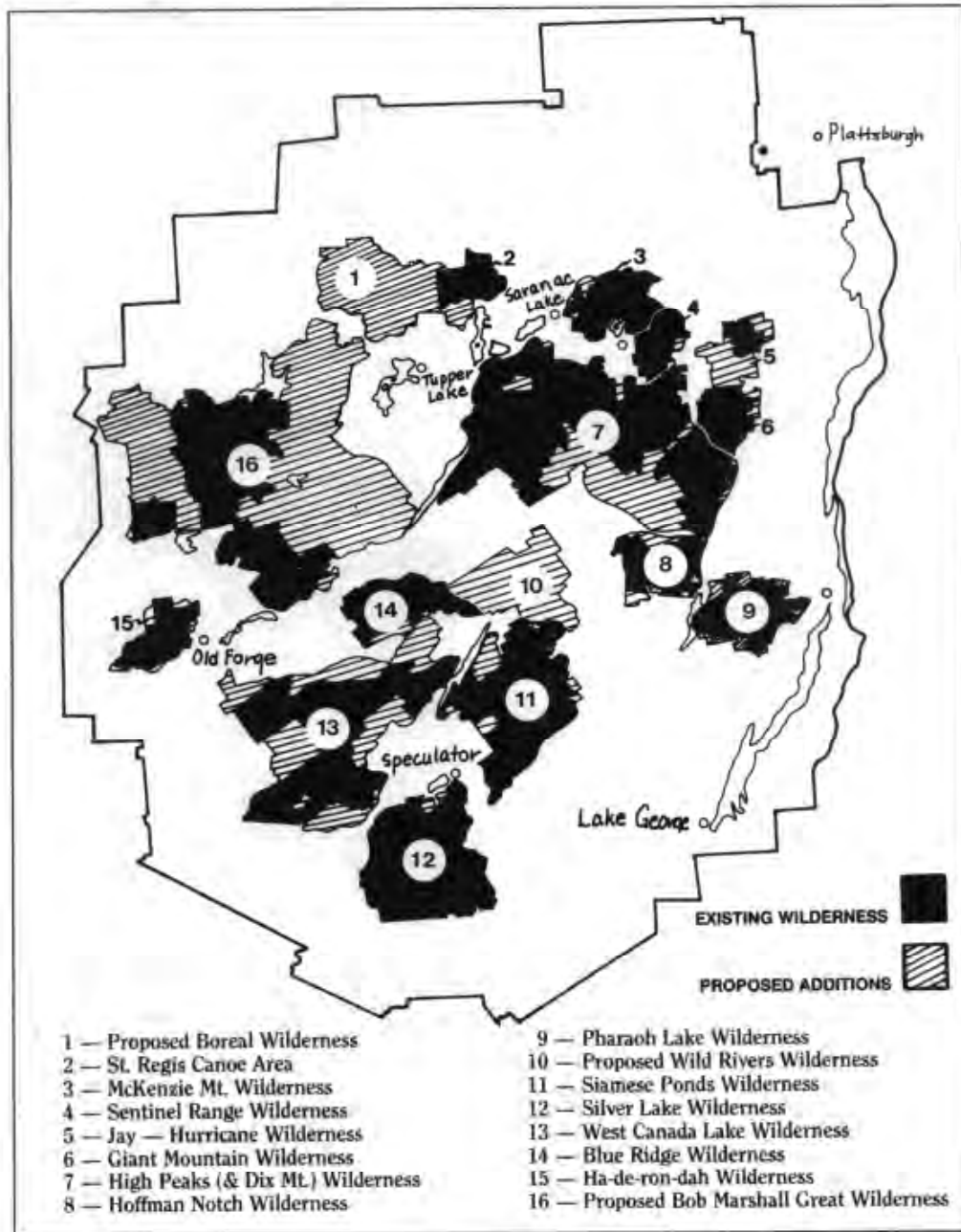
Adding to the controversy were state employees who drove their maintenance vehicles on fire truck trails deep into the "forever wild" Preserve, while the public hiked or canoed many miles to these same locations.

Such conflicts were addressed by a Joint Legislative Committee on Natural Resources in the late 1950s and early 1960s; by Governor Rockefeller's Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks in the late 1960s; and by the Adirondack Park Agency in its Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan of 1972.

To avoid recreational conflicts and protect the natural qualities of the Forest Preserve, the plan classified approximately half the Preserve as Wild Forest, allowing limited motorized use in these areas on designated routes. The plan also classified approximately half of the Preserve as Wilderness, Primitive or Canoe, where no motorized use would be permitted except for emergencies.



The Adirondack Wilderness System





Brian McWhin

Forest Preserve Accessibility



Though the Adirondack Forest Preserve must remain "forever wild," and its most sensitive areas are off limits to motorized use, the Preserve is surprisingly accessible to the driving and motorboating public. As the chart above indicates, 42% of the Forest Preserve is bordered by, or within one mile of, a public highway or public waterway open to motorboats. Some 82% of the Preserve is within three miles of public motor routes.

Determining Wilderness Boundaries

Today the Adirondack Wilderness System comprises 16 areas totalling 1,038,874 acres. In addition, there are 24 designated Primitive areas totalling 54,579 acres and managed similarly to Wilderness; all but two of these areas were designated Primitive by the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan in expectation that they would eventually be upgraded to Wilderness. There is also a designated Canoe Area, managed like Wilderness, of 18,606 acres.

The Adirondack Council has conducted a detailed review of the history of wilderness in the Adirondacks, followed by field and aerial studies of existing Wilderness, Primitive and Canoe Areas. A similar review was done of all other Adirondack lands, both public and private, that could and should be classified as Wilderness at some future time.

Ideally, all boundaries should serve to protect the integrity of natural communities while providing for the most efficient management. But perfect boundaries do not exist. Natural communities overlap, animal species have widely varying ranges, and subsurface water movement may not follow surface

drainage. Even so, watersheds offer the best natural boundaries.

In steep terrain with sharp ridges, boundaries can be easily identified and managed. Most of the Adirondacks, however, is characterized by gently rolling terrain where watershed perimeters are not readily identified on the ground. The administration of such "natural" boundaries would be difficult if not impossible. From an administrative standpoint, the best boundaries are highways and major waterways. From an ecological perspective, watersheds (also called drainages) offer the best natural boundaries.

For our purposes, therefore, the most appropriate Wilderness boundaries proved to be highways or major rivers and streams. An effort was made not to include more land than necessary to protect and manage the resource.

Other important considerations were present economic and recreational uses of private lands and the desirability of maintaining a roughly equal balance of Wilderness and Wild Forest areas.

NEW WILDERNESS PROPOSALS



Dirk Randorf

Bob Marshall Great Wilderness

Size: 408,777 Acres

Bob Marshall, a forester, founder of the Wilderness Society, and New York State native, originally identified the great wilderness potential of the Cranberry Lake-Beaver River area in a nationwide inventory he undertook in 1935-36. At that time, as Marshall later wrote, he analyzed "all the forest areas in the United States, embracing 300,000 acres or more, which have not yet been invaded by [public] routes of mechanized transportation." The Cranberry Lake-Beaver River area comprised 380,000 acres.

During the summer of 1923, Marshall had hiked most of the Cranberry Lake region, visiting, and ranking according to degree of scenic beauty, some 94 ponds. His descriptions of these interior wilderness trips provide an inspired (and little known) perspective on what was and is an incredibly wild region.

He noted, for example, that:

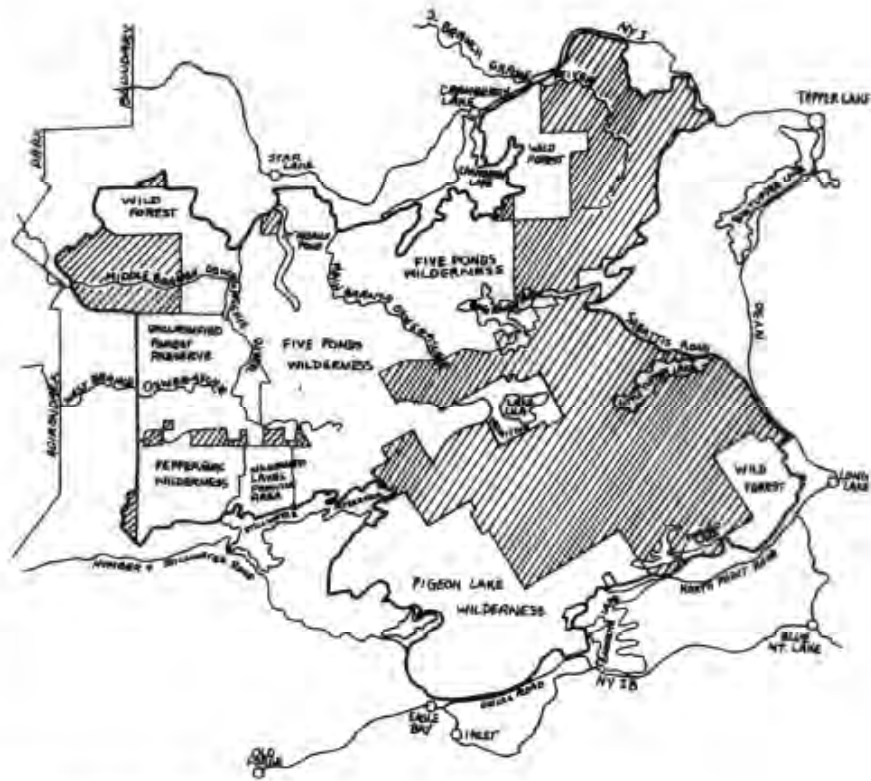
Only a subdued light filtered through the dense crowns of the dark spruce and hemlock. . . The old trail underfoot was the last connecting link with the pioneers of a century ago . . . when the North Woods were one unbroken stretch of luxuriant forest, where the wolf, the moose, and the deer lived and died without once being frightened by that most blood-thirsty of all creatures. . .

Remarkably, more than five decades later, the opportunity to preserve such an area still exists. In fact, the likely demise of the Penn Central (formerly New York Central) railroad would expand the potential wilderness to over one-half million acres, despite the loss of some peripheral portions of the area inventoried by Marshall. The Adirondack Council recommends that approximately three-fourths of the potential wilderness in this region be designated as the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness.

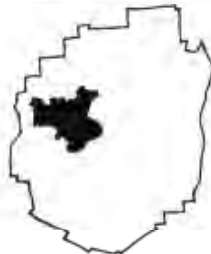


BOB MARSHALL, 1932

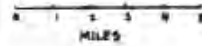
Bob Marshall Great Wilderness



BOB MARSHALL GREAT WILDERNESS



Adirondack Park



NECESSARY ACQUISITIONS



Recommendations for Bob Marshall Great Wilderness

The State of New York should create 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.

The Bob Marshall Great Wilderness would be the largest designated wilderness area in the eastern United States north of the Everglades. It could sustain viable populations of most (maybe all) species of animals endemic to the Adirondacks. It would contain nearly all Adirondack ecosystems as well as 441 lakes and ponds, 35 miles of designated wild rivers, and 36 miles of designated scenic rivers. It would be permanently safeguarded as the wildest, most remote region in the Adirondack Park.

A commitment by the State of New York to the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness would be a resounding reaffirmation of the value of preserving what's left of our natural environment. Such a wilderness cannot be established overnight, of course. But with a commitment to its eventual creation, an acquisition plan could be implemented reflecting the utmost consideration for the 22 landowners involved.

The proposed boundaries of the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness are based on hundreds of hours of field investigation, aerial survey, air photo interpretation, and study of topographic maps. Many factors were considered in the final decision, among them:

A. Ecological Integrity — Watershed units were emphasized, either entire drainages or half drainages where split by a major stream, in boundary selection.

B. Size — Unlike other wilderness boundary determinations in this study, maximizing total acreage was deemed absolutely essential, largely for ecological reasons. The extent of roadless area is critical to the survival of such wildlife species as the timber wolf and cougar, species that should be reintroduced to reflect the primeval Adirondack environment. This is basic to

the concept of a "Great Wilderness."

C. Patterns of Public Use — Boundaries were chosen that minimize impact on existing public use. Only four miles of public roads would be closed. The few snowmobile trails that must be closed for the area to qualify for wilderness designation should be relocated nearby outside the wilderness.

D. Impact on Forest Industry — Many areas adjacent to the proposed wilderness qualified for inclusion but were omitted to minimize the proposal's impact on the raw material resources of the local forest industry. Of particular importance are forest industry lands adjacent to the proposed wilderness in Lewis County. However, if these 26,000 acres are to remain in private ownership outside the proposed wilderness they must be protected as a permanent open-space buffer through the use of conservation easements. Public ownership of such easements will prevent future development while allowing present use to continue.

Application of the above standards will insure that the proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness:

- Can be defended on ecological grounds, including provision for restoring and sustaining extirpated species;
- Provides public access to lands and waters hitherto closed to public use;
- Opens many miles of canoe routes closed to the public for nearly a century;
- Leaves over 50,000 acres of productive timberlands (which might have been recommended for wilderness inclusion) available to the local forest industry;
- Provides for increased mileage of recreational roads, such as the Middle Branch-Long Pond road, to be open to public use;
- Remains buffered by a substantial area of private land suitable for sustained timber production (but not for subdivision or development).

Public use of motor vehicles in the buffer zone should be restricted to main haul roads to minimize threats to the wilderness and wildlife.

Boundary Descriptions

Proposed boundaries for the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness are based largely on natural drainages, thereby preserving intact, to the extent possible, the ecological integrity of the area. (See Appendix C on page 43 for detailed boundary descriptions.)

Proposed Boreal Wilderness

Size: 73,300 Acres

Canadian and Siberian taiga (the subarctic evergreen forest) symbolize to many the largest and most remote wilderness on earth. As Volume I of the 2020 VISION series demonstrated, 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 reflecting soils and microtopography in the northwest Adirondacks.

Volume I called for the creation of a Low Elevation Boreal Reserve in southern St. Lawrence and western Franklin Counties. Since the low elevation boreal biome (an 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 Adirondack Boreal Reserve should be designated a Boreal Wilderness.

The core of a Boreal Wilderness should logically be the Jordan River drainage. Perhaps nowhere in the Adirondack Park can the northern wilderness so completely engage all senses as when one canoes on the Jordan shortly after dawn. Civilization could be hundreds of miles away as the mist rises from the leather-leaf dominated fens, as the white-throated sparrow and the ruby-crowned kinglet call, while the towering old-growth pines drift in and out of the mist.

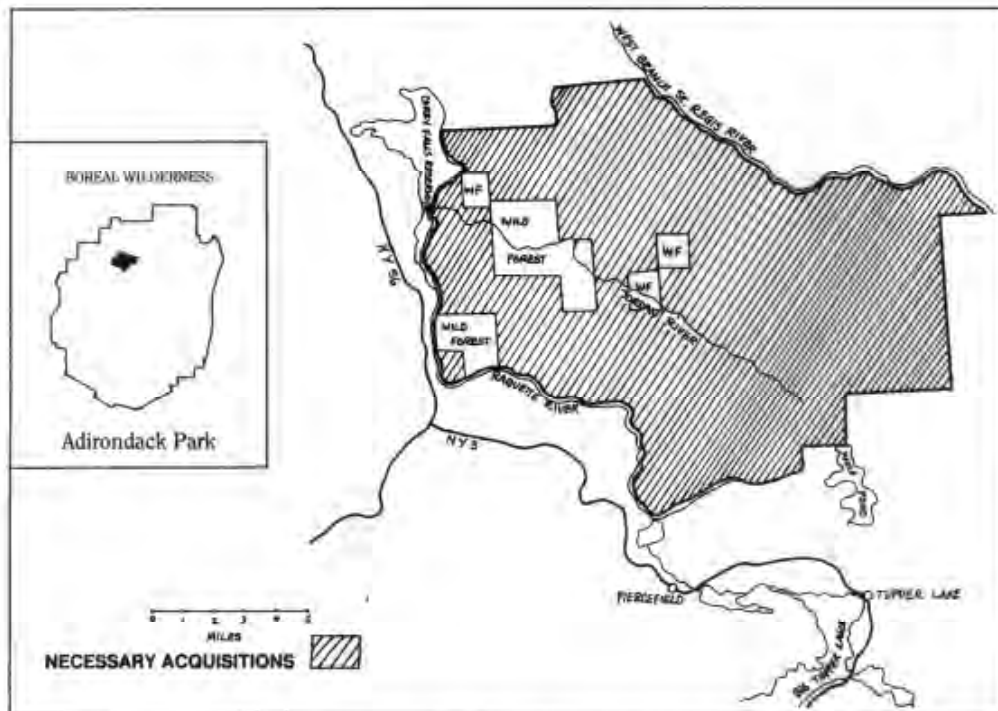
A review of the boreal ecosystems, existing land uses, buffering, and potential administrative problems, was undertaken to determine what lands in addition to the Jordan River drainage should be included in a Boreal Wilderness.

The goal is to create a compact and manageable wilderness unit containing exemplary boreal ecosystems of sufficient size to insure the functioning of all natural processes. The western boundary should clearly be the shoreline of Carry Falls Reservoir.

To the south the Raquette River was chosen as the best possible boundary from the confluence of Mountain Brook, just below Sols Island, to Carry Falls Reservoir. This major river forms an almost ideal ecological and administrative boundary and will provide adequate buffering of the Jordan River drainage. Although the Hardwood Hills and Mount Matumbla areas are not predominantly boreal in nature, most of the area north of this segment of river is and includes the critical Bear Brook flats and Windfall Brook swamp as well as the Ellis Brook wetlands and Salisbury Marsh. The lower Ellis Brook drainage has been criss-crossed with woods roads and skid trails, but the area will quickly recover once these roads are no longer in use. From Mountain Brook it is suggested that the jeep trail that connects the main haul road near Sols Island with Pitchfork Pond on the Derrick Road be used as a boundary. From here to the northeast this jeep trail would make an ecologically and administratively suitable boundary that would place the Bear Brook flats and Mount Matumbla in the wilderness while also providing a potential loop snowmobile trail, connecting Piercefield and Tupper Lake, to replace the mileage of snowmobile trail closed in the lower Jordan River drainage and perhaps elsewhere.



Carry Bunker



North of the Jordan River drainage it is proposed that the parallel Cold Brook drainage be included to protect the wilderness integrity of the Jordan River drainage and to provide sufficient undisturbed boreal habitat for those species of birds and mammals that depend on it. To accomplish this it is proposed that survey lines and main haul roads be used as the wilderness boundary from Carry Falls Reservoir eastward to the West Branch of the St. Regis River. Although survey lines are not usually a good wilderness boundary and require a survey and marking to enforce, they were chosen in this case to: (1) encompass the desired watersheds; (2) minimize impact on the forest industry; (3) incorporate significant boreal ecosystems in lots 27, 28, 35, and 36 critical to the integrity of the Boreal Reserve; and, (4) bring the northern boundary to the St. Regis River, which provides an ideal ecological and administrative boundary. The St. Regis River should form the remainder of the northern boundary to the point where it enters the St. Regis Canoe Area.

The best eastern boundary for the proposed Boreal Wilderness is the most difficult to establish. The most ecologically significant boundary would ensure that the entire Jordan River drainage and all of the St. Regis River drainage south of the river are included within the wilderness. Still, the upper reaches of these two watersheds lie outside the low elevation boreal

biome that is a principal reason for establishing this wilderness. The boreal biome boundary in this area runs approximately from Kildare Station on the Derrick Road to the northwestern corner of the St. Regis Canoe Area. And finally, the Derrick Road, although private, is a fairly high-standard road providing access to a number of land owners.

In view of these factors the proposed boundary encompasses the entire area for ecological reasons, but it is recognized that the eastern portion of the proposed Boreal Wilderness could meet all of the wilderness purposes except public access if all of it were subjected to preservation management, safeguarded in perpetuity through conservation easements or other legally-enforceable measures. With this in mind, the eastern boundary of the proposed Boreal Wilderness/preservation management area runs from the intersection of the St. Regis River with the St. Regis Canoe Area, follows the Canoe Area boundary west and south to the Derrick Road, which it then follows southward to the intersection of the jeep road in the vicinity of Pitchfork Pond where it joins with the southerly boundary previously described.

The proposed Boreal Wilderness, as thus described, encompasses 73,300 acres including all of the Jordan River, major reaches of the Raquette (14 miles) and the St. Regis (13 miles) rivers, and the central core of the proposed Low Elevation Boreal Reserve.

Proposed Wild Rivers Wilderness

Size: 72,480 Acres

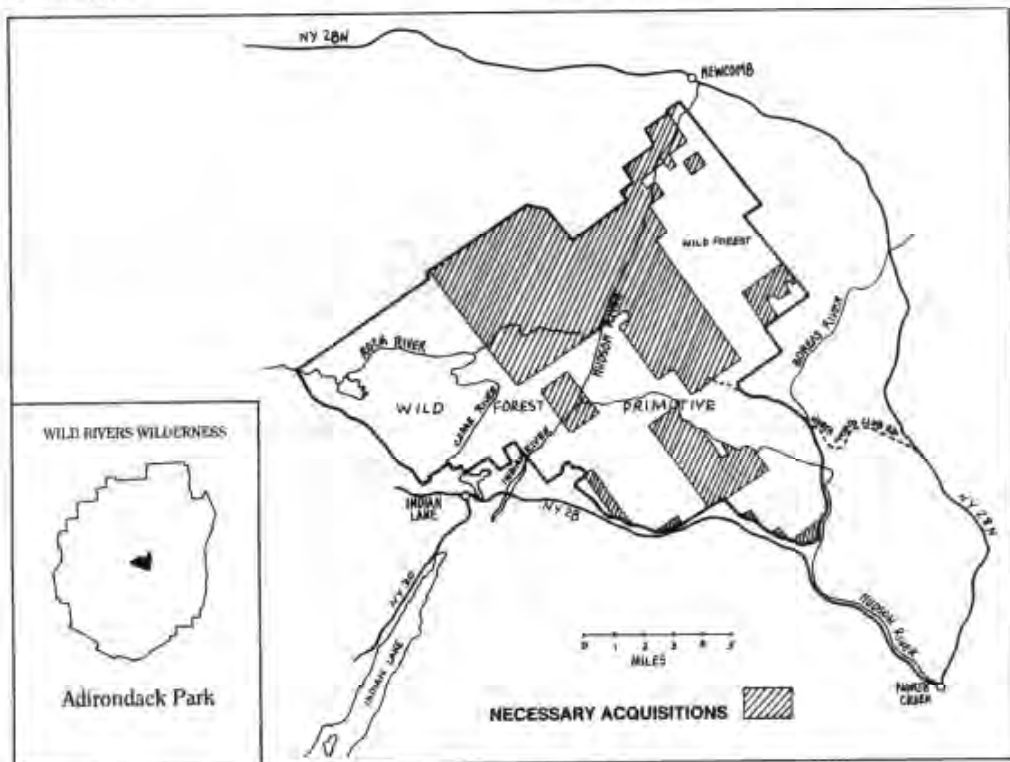
Through the geographic heart of the Park run some of the nation's finest wild and scenic rivers: the Boreas, Cedar, Hudson, Indian, and Rock. Forty-eight miles of these spectacular waterways, including the magnificent Hudson River Gorge, should form the core of a new Wild Rivers Wilderness. Whether fishing, canoeing, rafting the rivers or hiking the shoreline, the visitor cannot help but feel like an 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 create 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.

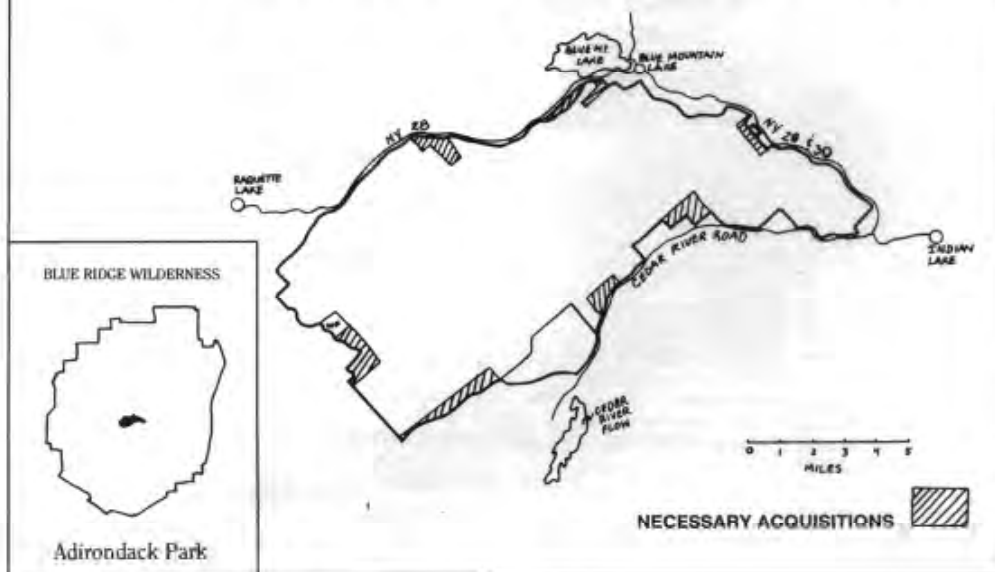
Here is the premier opportunity to establish a river-dominated wilderness containing the finest in riparian ecosystems and offering the best of wild-river recreation. The opportunity to create such a wilderness exists nowhere else in the nation east of the Rocky Mountains.

Significant results of these actions would be to:

- Incorporate 48 miles of state designated wild, scenic, and recreational rivers within a single wilderness unit.
- Incorporate the Hudson Gorge Primitive Area into the same wilderness.
- Place the entire Hudson Gorge in public ownership, including both Blue Ledge and OK Slip Falls.
- Include the entire Essex Chain Lakes watershed within the Wilderness.



SECURING EXISTING WILDERNESS



Blue Ridge Wilderness

Present Size: 45,951 Acres

Proposed Size: 51,851 Acres

The six-mile-long, 3,500-foot-high Blue Ridge massif forms the heart 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. Some spectacular rock faces occur along the area's southern perimeter. Immediately west of the wilderness are Durant's Sagamore Lodge, Camp Uncas, and Kamp Kill Kare, these being among the most famous of the Adirondack "great camps", and the extensive Moose River Plains recreation area.

No major boundary changes are necessary to preserve the Blue Ridge Wilderness. Although opportunities exist to expand the area considerably to the south and west, such expansions would impinge on the wild forest recreation provided by the Moose River Plains area without significantly improving the wilderness resource. Therefore, only nine relatively minor expansions, totaling 5,900 acres, are proposed. These proposals are meant to bring the Blue Ridge Wilderness boundaries to ecologically-significant and administratively-manageable locations. Six of these modifications, totaling 3,110 acres, require acquisition

of private land. Other needed actions: reclassification of the 120-acre Wakely Mountain Primitive Area and 200 acres of Forest Preserve presently classified wild forest, along with the classification of 2,470 acres of recently-acquired Forest Preserve.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Bring an additional 1.4 miles of the northern boundary of the Wilderness to NY 28, thus improving public access and administration.
- Bring much of the southern boundary of the Wilderness to the Cedar River Road and the Wakely Mountain trail, thus improving public access and administration;
- Bring much of the western boundary of the Wilderness to the Kamp Kill Kare Road, thus improving public access and administration and including the entire upper Lake Kora watershed in the Wilderness;
- Include all of the Lost Brook watershed in the Wilderness;
- Include all of the Lake Durant watershed south of the lake in the Wilderness.

Giant Mountain Wilderness

Present Size: 22,916 Acres

Proposed Size: 26,116 Acres

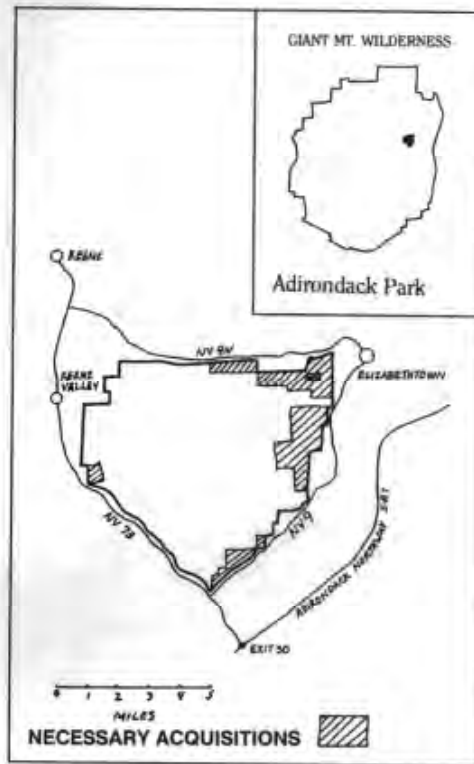
Although one of the smallest units of the Adirondack Wilderness System, the Giant Mountain Wilderness contains the greatest elevational gain per horizontal mile of any Adirondack wilderness: from 613 feet in Pleasant Valley to 4,627 feet at the summit of Giant Mountain. This rugged terrain offers not only challenging recreational experiences but harbors a rich variety of ecological life zones. Steep slopes and cliffs characterize the area. The rocky summit of Giant, the open meadows of Rocky Peak Ridge, and a 200-foot cataract on Roaring Brook, are among the distinctive features of this popular area.

No major boundary adjustments are necessary to preserve the Giant Mountain Wilderness although five expansions, totaling 3,200 acres, are recommended to protect the fragile mountain ecosystems and improve public access and area administration.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Incorporate the steep slopes of Bald Peak, Oak Hill, and Iron Mountain;
- Include essentially all of the Slide Brook, Putnam Brook, and Roaring Brook watersheds;
- Improve public access from NY 9 and 9N;
- Improve ease of management by bringing an additional 4.0 miles of boundary to highways or adjacent utility rights-of-way.

The Phelps Brook drainage and the slopes of Spread Eagle Mountain overlooking Keene Valley cannot be included in this Wilderness of which they should have been an integral part. Tragically, this wild area of very steep slopes has been lost to subdivision and development. Similar inroads of civilization prevent the boundary from being extended eastward all the way to NY 9.





Gay Rumberg

Ha-de-ron-dah Wilderness

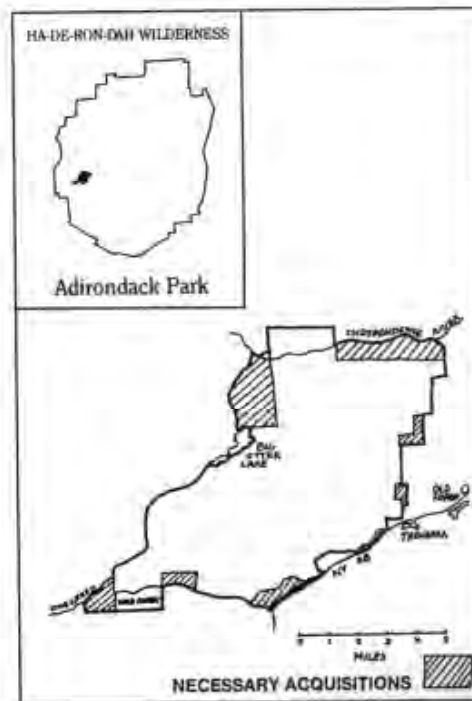
Present Size: 26,528 Acres
Proposed Size: 33,248 Acres

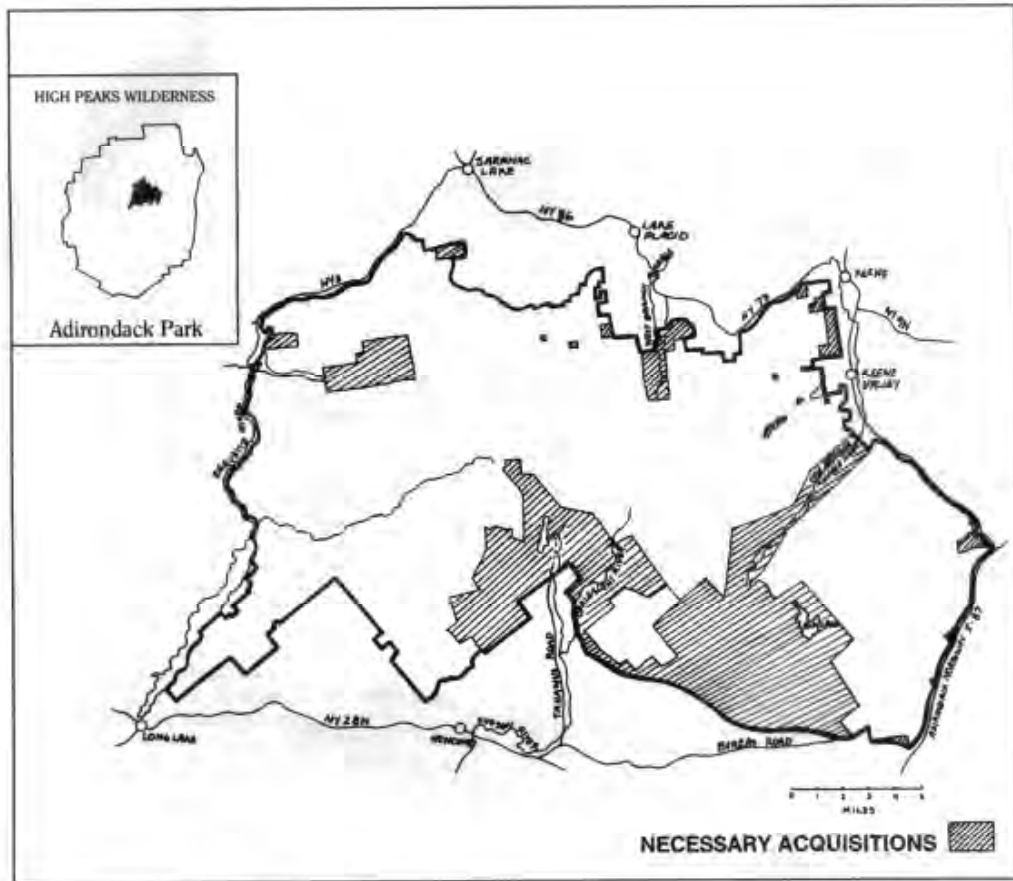
The original recommendations for an Adirondack Wilderness System in the early 1960's, made by the Joint Legislative Committee on Natural Resources and agreed to by the Conservation Department, referred to this area as the Big Otter Lake Wilderness after a large lake within the original wilderness proposal. A later recommendation of the Adirondack Study Commission, adopted by the Adirondack Park Agency and approved by the Governor, excluded Big Otter Lake and the lands west of the lake. This represented a compromise with sportsmen and floatplane operators who wanted continued motorized access to the lake.

In the spirit of this compromise, the Adirondack Council recommends the continued exclusion of Big Otter Lake from the Ha-de-ron-dah Wilderness. We do recommend, however, that the wilderness boundaries be expanded in nine locations to bring them to ecologically-significant and administratively-manageable locations. Eight of these expansions, totaling 5,880 acres, require the purchase of private land. One additional modification requires the reclassification of 840 acres of Forest Preserve presently classified as wild forest.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Include all of the upper Big Otter Lake watershed in the Wilderness;
- Add 4.2 miles of the Independence River;
- Include all of the Pine Creek watershed east of the main stem;
- Bring much of the southern boundary to NY 28, thus improving public access and administration.





High Peaks (including Dix Mountain) Wilderness

Present Size: 238,008 Acres

Proposed Size: 314,694 Acres

The High Peaks Wilderness contains the largest and most majestic of the Adirondack mountains. Thirty-three of the 46 "high peaks" are in this Wilderness; consolidating the Dix Mountain Wilderness with the High Peaks Wilderness, as proposed, will bring the total to 42.

The range trail from St. Huberts to Mount Marcy traverses the State's most rugged terrain. The Cold River Country, once home for the sociable hermit, Noah John Rondeau, is one of the wildest watersheds in the Northeast. Yet the High Peaks Wilderness is losing the very characteristic that makes it so special — its wildness. It is estimated that over 100,000 people use this area in the course of a year. Although

the High Peaks will always be a popular destination, much of the problem caused by such heavy and concentrated use has to do with present boundary location, inholdings, resource limitations and management difficulties. These deficiencies must be recognized and reasonable measures taken to protect the wilderness character of the area.

For the High Peaks Wilderness, it is essential to establish boundaries that will best protect the resource; insure ecological stability, and facilitate enlightened management. Excluding existing communities, the boundaries should be the Adirondack Northway (I-87) and NY 73 on the east, the Boreas Road and NY 28N on the south, NY 30 on



Dave Koster

the west and NY 3, and 73 on the north. Although such a proposal could not be fully implemented for many years, the potential for future change in the park's economy and in traditional views of land use are such that any Forest Preserve acquired within this wide-flung net should be classified as wilderness or primitive to preserve such a future option.

What can be accomplished in the foreseeable future is 1) a major expansion to the south, 2) acquisition by fee or preservation easement (such as exists on the Adirondack Mountain Reserve) of various inholdings, 3) moving the Adirondack Loj entry point northward, and 4) adding the Dix Mountain Wilderness and the Roger Brook drainage to the High Peaks Wilderness. In all, the acquisition of 52,950 acres, and re-classification of 13,820 acres of wild forest and 700 acres of primitive, is necessary to protect and enhance the High Peaks Wilderness.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Consolidate the High Peaks and Dix Mountain Wilderness;
- Eliminate the Ampersand and Johns Brook Primitive Area;
- Substantially increase the boundary along public roads;
 - Include most of the Opalascant Wild River watershed;
 - Include all of the southern Ossetah Lake watershed;
 - Include all of Ampersand Brook watershed;
 - Include the upper watershed of The Branch;
 - Include all of the Henderson Lake and Calamity Brook watersheds;
 - Include all of the Boreas Ponds watershed;
 - Include all of the upper East Branch of the Ausable River watershed.

Hoffman Notch Wilderness

Present Size: 36,305 Acres

Proposed Size: 45,266 Acres

One of the most rugged trailless areas in the Northeast, this wilderness is characterized by huge, old-growth northern hardwoods and red spruce. Steep slopes and dense forests make travel here — except on the Hoffman Notch Trail — extremely difficult. The wilderness character is thus insured.

But the northern and southern boundaries are neither ecologically nor administratively sound. Land ownership and development patterns are obstacles to improving the southern boundary, although recommendations to overcome these obstacles are set forth below. For the northern boundary, the most logical perimeter is along the Branch River and the Boreas Road — yet major difficulties are presented here as well.

An electric transmission line lies between the present northern boundary and The Branch for a distance of 8.7 miles. For the most part this line is within one-quarter mile of the river. More troublesome is the presence of a 2,335-acre tract of state land, known as the Sand Pond Mountain tract, whose southern corner juts into the heart of the Wilderness

threatening its ecological integrity. The Sand Pond Mountain tract is integral to the Hoffman Notch Wilderness and should be included in this unit.

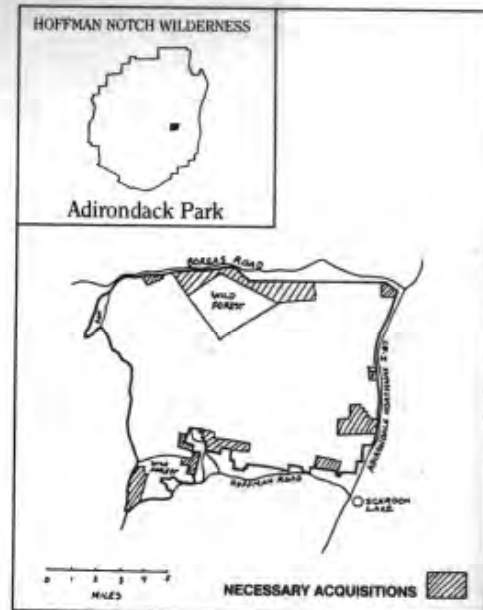
A total of nine private land acquisitions, totaling 5,160 acres, and four state land reclassifications, totaling 3,875 acres, are necessary to bring the boundaries of the Hoffman Notch Wilderness to the best locations still possible.

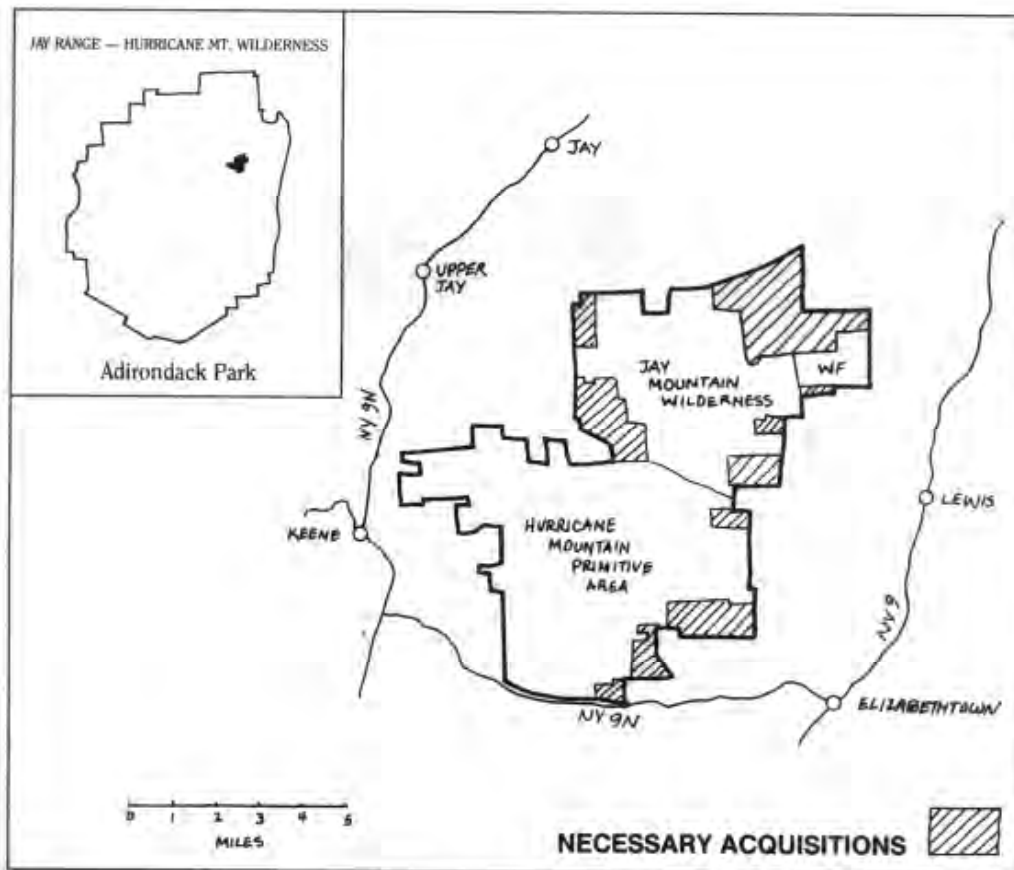
Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Bring a total of 4.6 miles of the area's eastern boundary to the right-of-way of the Adirondack Northway (I-87); bring 4.4 miles of the northern boundary to the Boreas Road (Essex County Route 2) and the remaining 8.7 miles to the major electric transmission line;
- Include the entire eastern half of the Minerva Stream drainage basin;
- Include the entire Hoffman Notch Brook watershed;
- Include the entire Platt Brook watershed;
- Include the entire east and west branch watersheds of Trout Brook.



Richard Link





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 new Wilderness which can be established by merging the 7,100-acre Jay Mountain Wilderness, the 13,449-acre Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area, and the 560-acre Mount Fay Wild Forest. Closing the Glen-Wells Hill Road, a jeep trail which presently severs the Jay Mountain Wilderness from the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area, will be controversial. But claims that closing this road will prevent easy access can be countered with the fact that motor vehicle access to this area is, and should remain, excellent. More than 95% of this Wilderness will be within two miles of a public road even after closure of the Glen-Wells Hill Road.

Ten private parcels, totaling 5,200 acres, are

recommended for acquisition to establish watershed units as the natural, ecological components of this wilderness.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Include "The Glen" and the upper Styles Brook watershed;
- Include the upper, unroaded portion of the Hale Brook watershed;
- Include the upper Jackson Brook watershed and most of the upper Falls Brook watershed;
- Bring an additional 2.0 miles of the boundary to public roads, thus improving access and administration;
- Include the mountain ecosystems of Bluff, Big Lawler and Little Lawler mountains.

McKenzie Mountain Wilderness

Present Size: 37,798 Acres

Proposed Size: 40,368 Acres

Characterized by a densely-forested massif rising 2,000 feet over the nearby villages of Saranac Lake and Lake Placid, the McKenzie Mountain Wilderness has remained a little-known natural sanctuary near some of the best-known attractions in the Adirondack park: the West Branch of the Ausable River, Whiteface Memorial Highway, Whiteface Mountain, Wilmington Notch, and the two principal population centers in the northern Adirondacks.

The area can continue to be a wild refuge with a few, relatively small boundary adjustments along the Saranac River and the Whiteface Inn road, and immediately behind the developed northwestern shoreline of Lake Placid. The latter boundary adjustment will prevent the kind of mountainside condominium development that would not only intrude on the McKenzie Mountain Wilderness but also degrade the scenic and water quality of Lake Placid. To achieve these goals, approximately 1,690 acres of private land must be acquired.

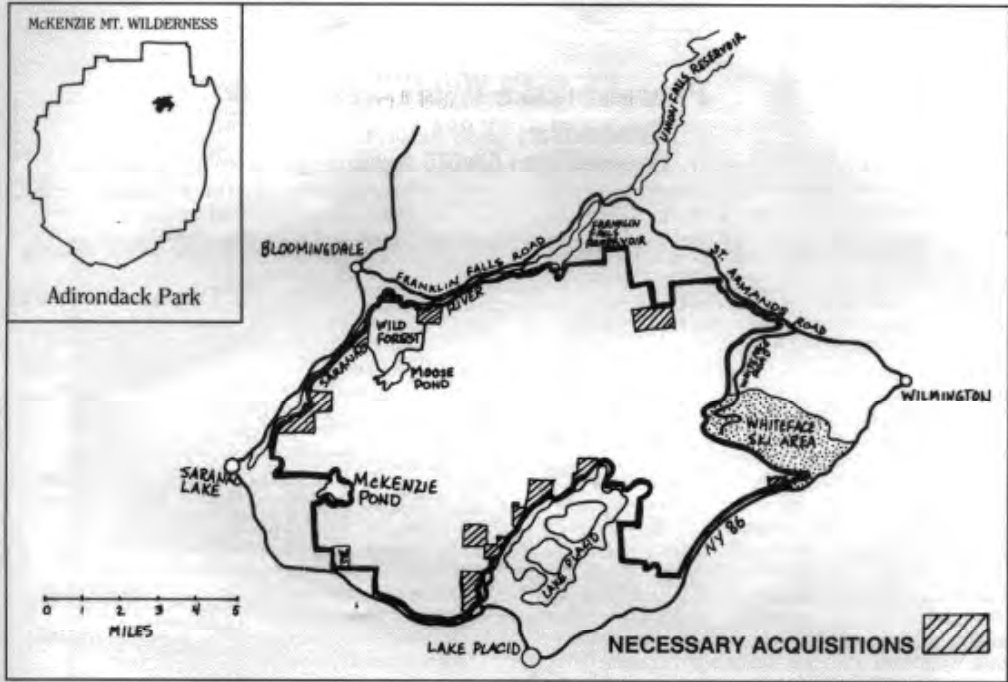
Moose Pond is excluded from the present Wilderness. Because it sits in a basin integral to the Wilderness, and because the watersheds above and

below it are within the Wilderness, Moose Pond should be added to safeguard the ecological integrity of this area. To do so will entail closing the upper half-mile of the Moose Pond Road and the small boat launch site at the pond. The pond can easily be fished by canoe, guideboat, rubber raft or small row boat, all of which can be carried the short distance from the proposed road terminus. Approximately 880 acres of Forest Preserve north and west of Moose Pond should be reclassified as wilderness. Eventually, and probably far in the future in view of the camps along the lower Moose Pond Road, the wilderness boundary should be extended north to the Saranac River.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Incorporate all of the Moose Pond and Moose Creek watershed;
- Bring the boundary to the Saranac River, thus increasing the total river boundary to 12 uninterrupted miles;
- Improve access to Lincoln Brook and include the upper Lincoln Brook watershed;
- Open to the public (through public acquisition) the scenic High Falls Gorge on the Ausable River.





Alan Cederstrom

Pharaoh Lake Wilderness

Present Size: 45,884 Acres

Proposed Size: 53,175 Acres

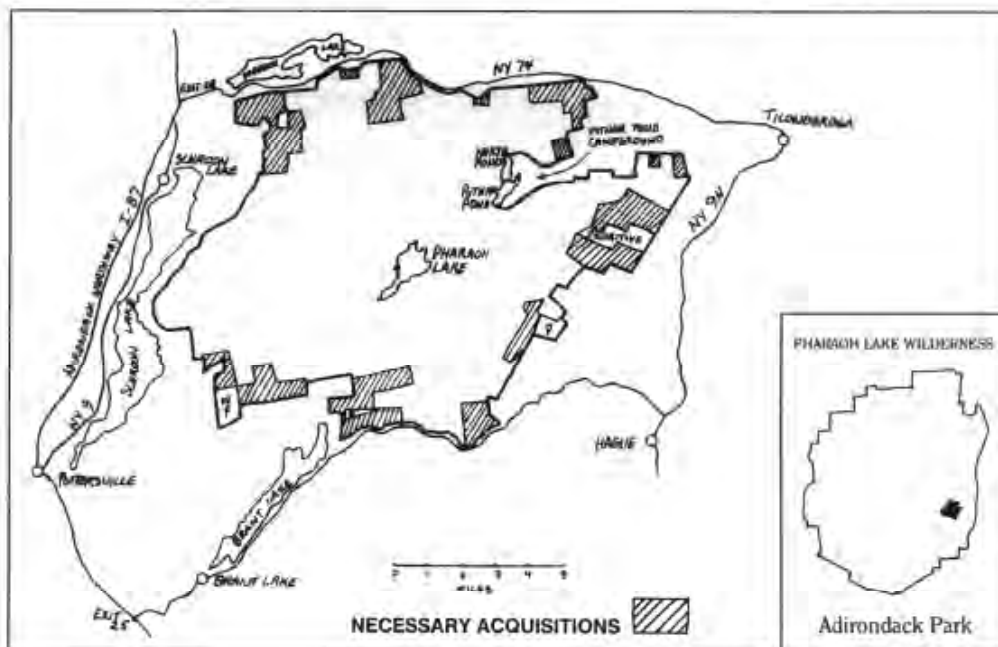
Grizzle Ocean, Desolate Swamp, Devil's Washdish, The Dam Hill, Thunderbolt Mountain and Oxshoe Pond — such are the colorfully-named features of a wilderness that contains some of the most beautiful landscapes and lakescapes in the Adirondack Park.

To round out and protect this Wilderness, 6,190 acres of private land in 15 locations on the periphery must be acquired, along with the 500-acre Bald Ledge Primitive Area, the 91-acre First Brother Primitive Area, the 210-acre Hague Brook Primitive Area, and 300 acres of Forest Preserve presently classified Wild Forest. These additions will insure that the wilderness resources that define the potential Pharaoh Lake Wilderness are to be preserved for all time.

Once these actions have been completed, the cliffs and clear ponds, the hardwood coves and white birch-white pine forests, the spectacular views and diverse wildlife, and the solitude and promise of the Pharaoh Lake Wilderness will repay our generation many times over.

Other significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Include Pyramid Lake and the Pyramid Lake and Pyramid Brook watersheds;
- Include the watersheds of Haymeadow Brook, Bear Pond Outlet, Chub Pond and Chub Pond Outlet, Cotter Pond, and the West Branch of Riley Creek;
- Increase the proportion of the Alder Creek watershed;
- Preserve the steep slopes and mountain ecosystems of Bald Ledge, Barton Mountain, Blanchard Mountain, Ellis Mountain, First Brother Mountain, Old Fort Mountain, and Park Mountain;
- Improve management access by bringing an additional 2.5 miles of boundary to public roads;
- Provide trailheads and trails to Park and First Brother Mountain;
- Incorporate the Bald Ledge, First Brother, and Hague Brook Primitive Areas.



St. Regis Canoe Area

Present Size: 18,606 Acres

Proposed Size: 28,343 Acres



Cary Ranker

The lake-and-pond-studded St. Regis Canoe Area is managed essentially as wilderness under the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. The only significant difference is that existing state truck trails, motor vehicles, motorized equipment, and aircraft may be used by administrative personnel to preserve or enhance the water or fishery resources.

Unsurpassed canoe travel and camping is available 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 well suited for cross-country skiing. With the recent state acquisition of the bordering Penn Central Railroad right-of-way, the opportunity now exists to expand the Canoe Area to the south and increase its lake and pond inventory from 58 to 84 bodies of water.

Unfortunately, the lack of a state plan identifying such an opportunity has recently allowed changing land uses on the few private tracts within the area, thus making expansion more difficult than it might

have been. Still, eventual acquisition of only 50 acres of private lands, containing fifteen camps, will 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 in the canoe area. The Floodwood Road should be closed at Polliwog Pond where a parking area and major entry point would be built. The Floodwood Road could remain open for administrative use in protecting the waters and fisheries of the area. Smaller additions to the St. Regis Canoe Area are recommended on the east and north. Four private ponds (Dry Channel, Otter, West Pine and Windfall) adjacent to the canoe area's western boundary, and proposed for eventual inclusion in the Boreal Wilderness, would enhance the area's canoeing opportunities.

It is recommended that a total of 860 acres of private land be acquired and 9,020 acres of existing Wild Forest be reclassified to fulfill the promise of the St. Regis Canoe Area.

St. Regis Canoe Area



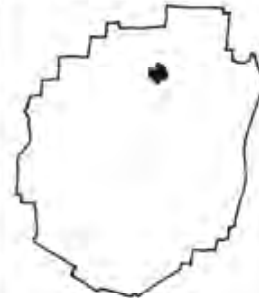
NECESSARY ACQUISITIONS



RR Line ++++++

Floodwood Road - - - - -

ST. REGIS CANOE WILDERNESS



Adirondack Park

Sentinel Range Wilderness

Present Size: 23,252 Acres

Proposed Size: 24,252 Acres

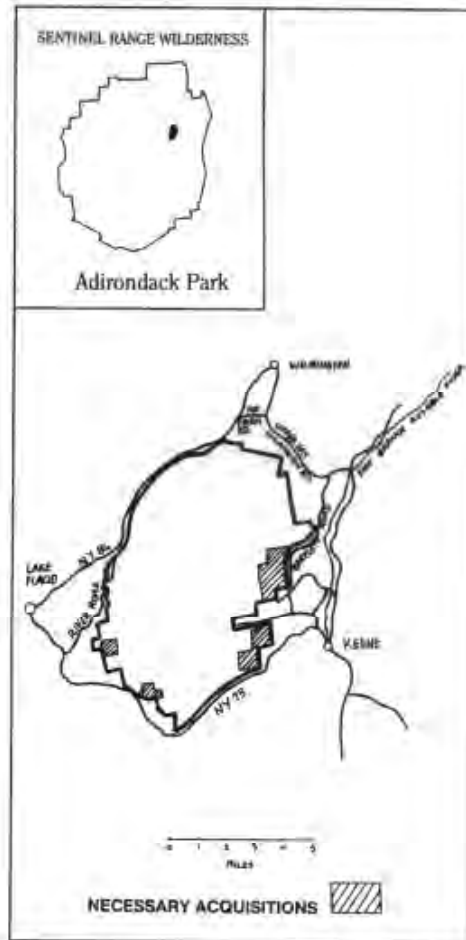
A small, rugged wilderness sandwiched between the hamlet of Keene and Wilmington Notch, the Sentinel Range offers a surprising degree of seclusion. Only the Copperas-Owen-Winch ponds section, just above Wilmington Notch, and the Military Road north of Pitchoff Mountain, receive significant recreational use. The light use and lack of specific attractions in the interior make the Sentinel Range an important mountain-ecosystem reserve.

Opportunities exist to expand the area by 5-6,000 acres on the east, from Hickock Mountain at the northeast to Brown Mountain at the southeast. However, much of this area would not add to the wilderness value and would displace a number of compatible uses. The Bartlett, Alstead Hill, and Lacy Road area offers a wide range of opportunities for both commercial and non-commercial recreational uses such as cross-country skiing, horseback riding, bed and breakfast establishments, and low density residential use. It is recommended, therefore, that only 1,780 acres be acquired and added to the wilderness. A 40-acre parcel of wild forest in the Town of North Elba should also be added.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Incorporate all of the upper Clifford Brook watershed above the falls;
- Diversify the vegetative species by adding some of the scrub-oak type on Brown Mountain;
- Eliminate what is essentially an inholding in the Roaring Brook drainage;
- Bring what is now a difficult-to-define boundary to the old Military Road;
- Use NY 73 as a boundary for an additional, three-fourths mile;
- Bring a portion of the eastern boundary to Bartlett Road to provide better public access and create a more manageable boundary.

It is further recommended that any lands the State can acquire between the Sentinel Wilderness and the Fox Farm Road, Upper Jay-Wilmington Road, and Bartlett Road be classified as Wilderness (or Primitive when appropriate) to protect the integrity of the area.



Siamese Ponds Wilderness

Present Size: 113,674 Acres

Proposed Size: 125,574 Acres



Auger Falls, Siamese Ponds, and Puffer Pond . . . the cataracts, rock faces, and mountain swamps of Eleventh Mountain . . . the East Branch of the Sacandaga and Kunjamuk rivers . . . names like Burnt Shanty Clearing, Square Falls Mountain, and Bullhead Mountain . . . all these elements combine to lure visitors to the Siamese Ponds Wilderness.

Views of the High Peaks and Silver Lake Wilderness are frequent from several trailless peaks in the region. Chimney Mountain with its cave and year-round ice is geologically unique in the park. More than 60 lakes and extensive wetlands add richness and beauty to this land where serenity reigns.

Buffering provided by the extensive Wilcox Lake Wild Forest to the southeast, the Sacandaga River to the east, and International Paper Company's Speculator Tree Farm to the west help insure that the Siamese Ponds Wilderness will remain the lovely centerpiece of a quarter-million-acre open space reserve.

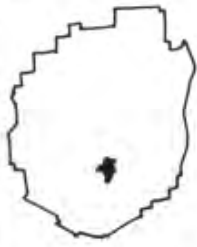
The southern boundary — NY 8, NY 30, and the Sacandaga River — is both ecologically and administratively sound, with only a few small inholdings requiring acquisition and .75 mile of Teachout Road (a dead-end dirt road) requiring closure. But the remaining boundaries make little

sense from either an ecological or administrative perspective, except for a recent reclassification that used watershed boundaries to incorporate the Black Mountain Brook drainage into the Wilderness. The acquisition of 8,800 acres in a dozen locations, and the reclassification of 3,100 acres of Forest Preserve, is needed to extend the Siamese Ponds Wilderness to logical boundaries and fulfill the area's enormous potential.

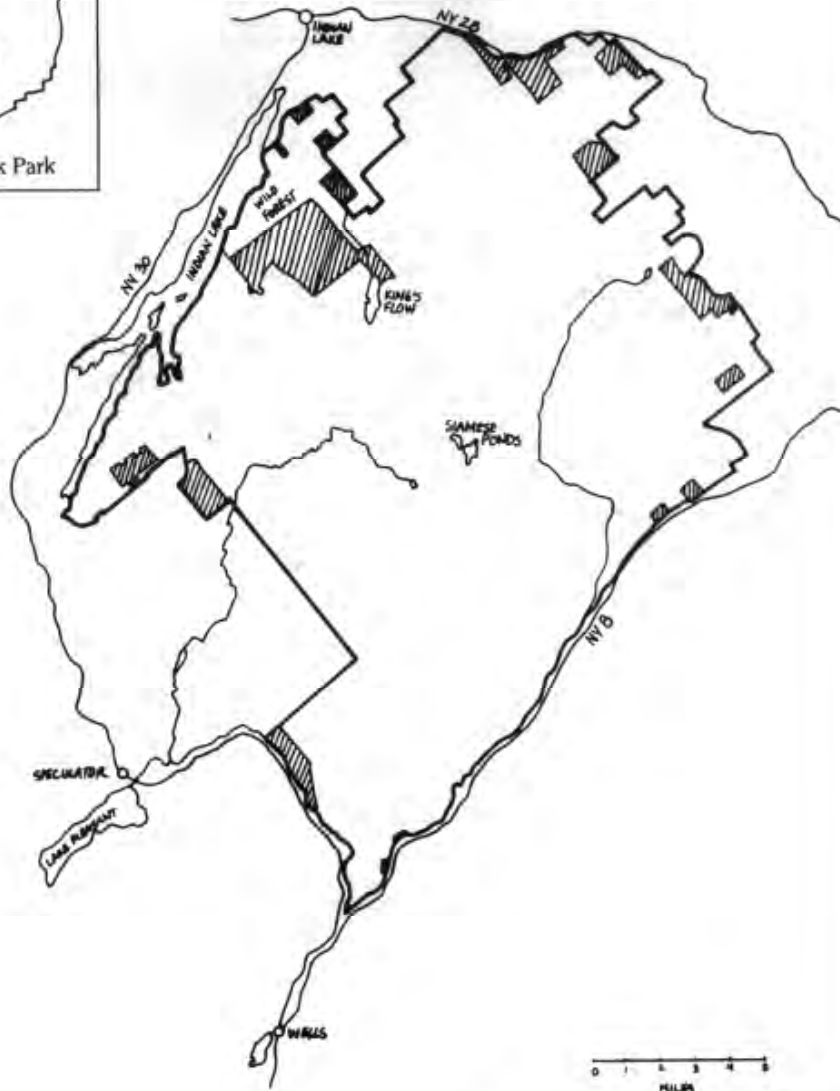
Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Bring the southern boundary to either the Sacandaga River or NY 8 or NY 30, as appropriate;
- Provide public access to diverse recreational opportunities in the northern portion;
- Include the eastern shoreline and watershed of Indian Lake;
- Include the Cisco Brook and Owl Pond watersheds;
- Include the entire Round Pond Brook watershed;
- Bring the northern boundary to NY 28 or the parallel utility right-of-way, thus improving public access and ease of management;
- Include most of the Halfway Brook and Botheration Pond watersheds;
- Incorporate the Chatiemac Lake, Forks, and Dug Mountain Primitive Areas.

SIAMESE PONDS WILDERNESS



Adirondack Park



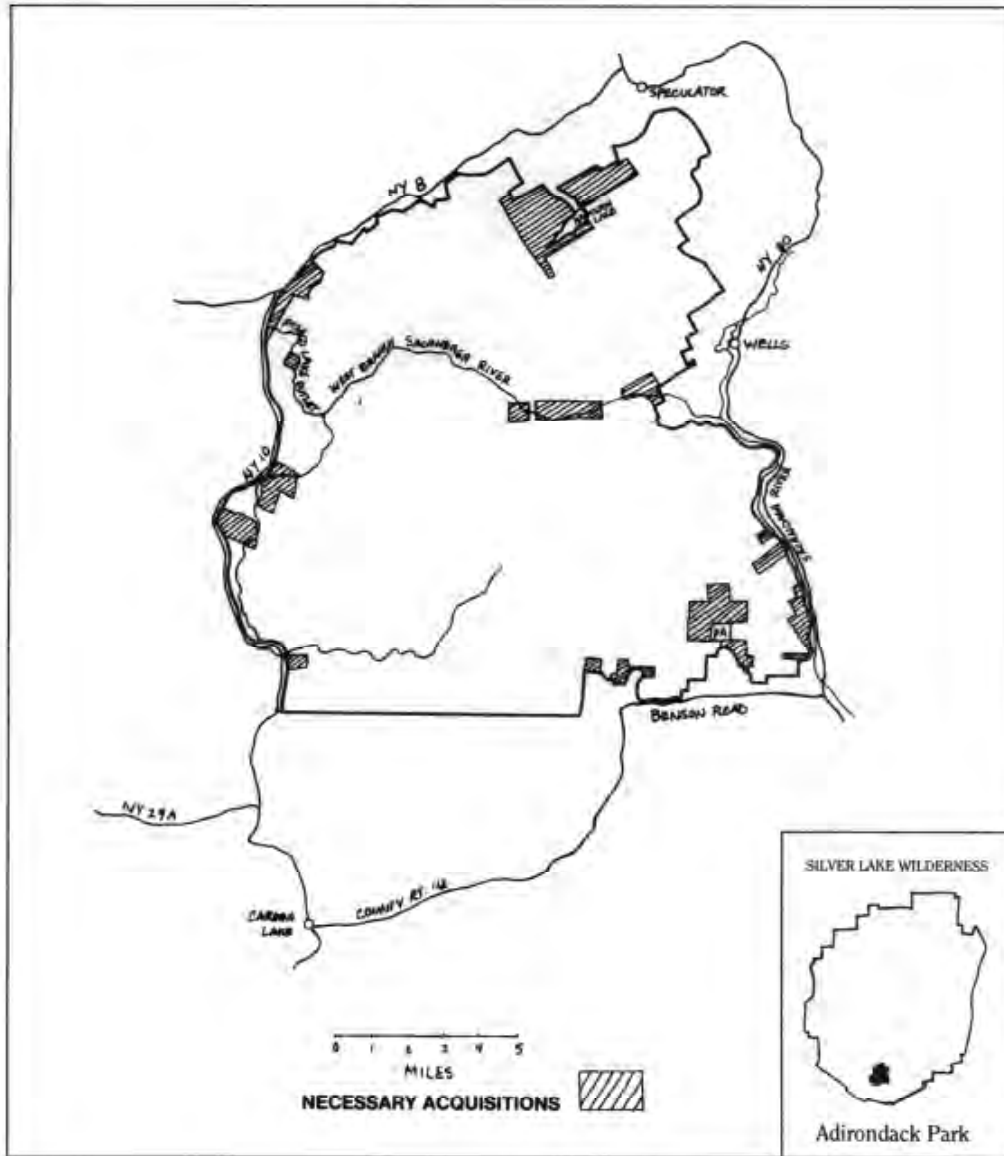
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MILES

NECESSARY ACQUISITIONS 

Silver Lake Wilderness

Present Size: 105,814 Acres

Proposed Size: 117,010 Acres



Extensive northern hardwood and mixed-wood forests, from spectacular old growth yellow birch and red spruce on the flank of Three Ponds Mountain to the huge white pines standing guard over the West Branch cataracts, characterize the Silver Lake Wilderness. The Northville-Lake Placid trail begins near Benson at the southern boundary and winds through the great forests and across myriad streams for 21 miles on its way northward to Piseco Lake.

With over 100,000 geographically-compact acres, the Silver Lake Wilderness could be one of the most ecologically-significant sanctuaries in the country. But this can only happen when the upper six miles of the West River Road, a gravel road that penetrates to the heart of the area, is closed. This closure 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 given the highest possible priority, but it must also be undertaken over a reasonable period of time, with understanding and sensitivity to present users and with a sincere effort to provide alternative motorized hunting opportunities by means of an aggressive conservation easement program throughout the Park.*

Other acquisitions along the periphery of the area, and purchase of the Cathhead Mountain inholding, are also needed to enhance the area's ecological value and ease administrative burdens.

An expansion of 11,196 acres is proposed to bring the Silver Lake Wilderness boundaries to ecologically-

significant and administratively-manageable locations, thereby preserving the wilderness resource. This expansion involves reclassification of the 206-acre Cathhead Mountain Primitive Area, the Sacandaga Primitive Corridor, and 2,510 acres of the Ferris Lake Wild Forest. It also entails acquisition of 8,480 acres of private land with multiple ownerships. The Hamilton Lake Seminar Center will likely remain a small inholding for some time, but the remainder of the Hamilton Lake Stream watershed should be preserved in the near future. The Lower River Road and the Arietta areas include numerous residences; these areas should be viewed as longer-range acquisition goals that can best be achieved through the use of life estates or purchases with lengthy retained rights.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Include all of the West Branch of the Sacandaga River watershed between Blackbridge and NY 10;
- Eliminate the critical inholdings along the West Branch of the Sacandaga River, allow the West River Road to be closed, and allow an additional 12 miles of the West Branch to be reclassified as a Wild River;
- Incorporate 37 miles of rivers already designated in the State's Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers System;
- Bring the southeast boundary to the Sacandaga River, thus improving administration and including the western half of the drainage of this river section.



Alan Coleman

West Canada Lake Wilderness

Present Size: 169,695 Acres

Proposed Size: 219,150 Acres





George R. Rinehart

Famed as the haunt of French Louis, the West Canada Lake Wilderness is one of the outstanding Adirondack wilderness areas in both size and quality. This area, together with the Moose River Plains to the north, was one of 48 potential forest wilderness areas in the United States, of more than 300,000 acres in size, inventoried by Bob Marshall in 1935-36. The area identified by Marshall included 430,000 acres, of which 169,695 acres now constitute the West Canada Lake Wilderness. The Adirondack Council believes the present Wilderness should be expanded to 219,150 acres.

Recent acquisitions in the Perkins Clearing and Little Squaw Brook areas have begun to expand the West Canada Lake Wilderness boundaries to ecologically-rational locations. Action is now needed to enhance and preserve this area. All or part of four major watersheds should be incorporated into the West Canada Lake Wilderness. This will require the acquisition of 30,180 acres of private land in 16 locations and the reclassification of 19,275 acres of Forest Preserve. The reclassification includes 15,710 acres of the Moose River Plains Wild Forest south of the South Branch of the Moose River, 600 acres of the Black River Wild Forest Area, the 20-acre Buell Brook Primitive Area, the entire 2,935-acre West Canada Mountain Primitive Area, and the 10-acre Wilmurt Club Road Primitive Area. The most controversial of these actions will be the closing of the Otter Brook Road south of the South Branch of the Moose River, a road long popular with hunters and fishermen.

Significant benefits of these actions would be to:

- Include the southern half of the South Branch of the Moose River watershed, including the entire

Indian River and Otter Brook drainage basins, from Combs Brook inlet upstream to the headwaters at Little Moose Lake;

- Include the Cedar River watershed upstream from Cedar River Flow;

- Include the West Canada Creek watershed upstream from the inlet of Honnedaga Brook;

- Include essentially all of the South Branch of West Canada Creek watershed upstream from the Flow;

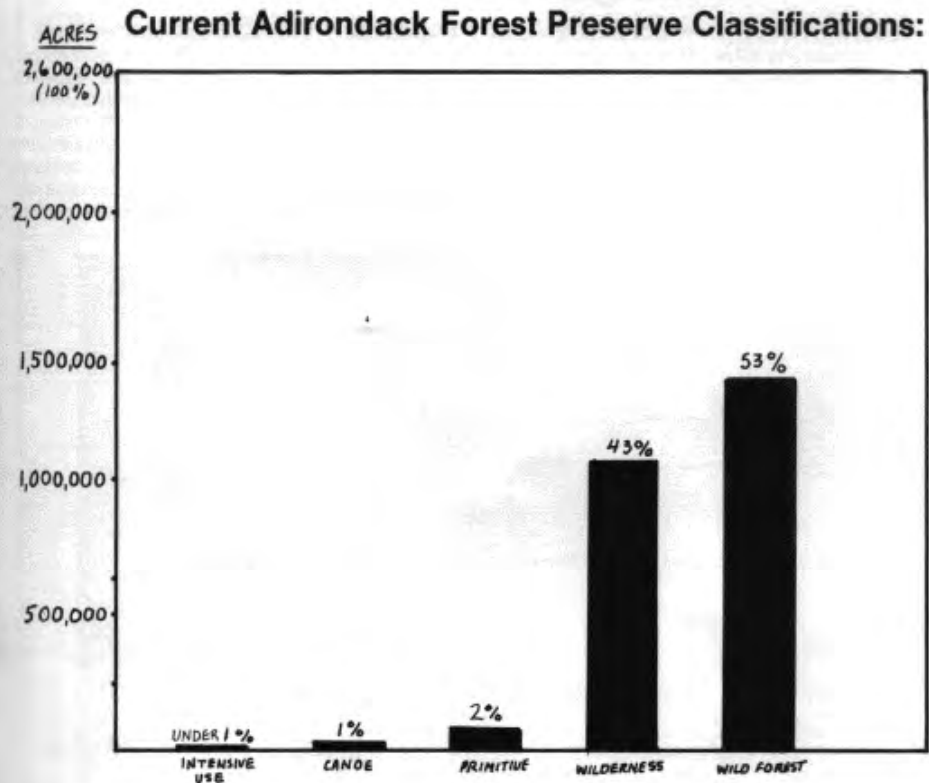
- Incorporate 12 miles of the West Canada Creek Scenic River, four miles of the South Branch of West Canada Creek Wild River, and 10 miles of the Otter Brook Scenic River. These additions would complement the 30 miles of wild river segments already in the Wilderness. An additional 29 miles of the South Branch of the Moose River (scenic), five miles of West Canada Creek (scenic) and eight miles of the South Branch of West Canada Creek (recreational), would form the boundaries of this expanded West Canada Lake Wilderness. A total of 98 miles of state-designated wild, scenic or recreational rivers will thus be within the Wilderness or forming its boundaries;

- Bring the northern boundary to the South Branch of the Moose River, thus improving administration and helping to eliminate illegal motor-vehicle trespass;

- Bring the southern boundary to the South Branch of West Canada Creek and NY 8, thus simplifying administration and improving public access;

- Eliminate the Buell Brook, West Canada Mountain, and Wilmurt Club Road Primitive Areas.

Appendix A



WILD FOREST: Motorized recreation allowed in designated areas

WILDERNESS: Motorized recreation prohibited

PRIMITIVE: Motorized recreation prohibited

CANOE: Motorized recreation prohibited

INTENSIVE USE: Public campgrounds, downhill ski areas, boat launch sites, etc.

Appendix B

The Adirondack Wilderness System — Existing And Proposed —

<u>Area</u>	<u>Existing Acreage</u>	<u>Proposed Acreage</u>
Blue Ridge	45,951	51,636
Bob Marshall	—	408,777
Boreal	—	73,300
Dix Mountain	45,223	—
Five Ponds	101,171	—
Giant Mountain	22,916	26,116
Ha-de-ron-dah	26,528	33,248
High Peaks	192,785	314,694
Hoffman Notch	36,305	45,266
Jay Mountain	7,100	—
Jay Range — Hurricane Mountain	—	26,309
McKenzie Mountain	37,798	40,368
Pepperbox	14,625	—
Pharaoh Lake	45,884	53,175
Pigeon Lake	50,100	—
Sentinel Range	23,252	24,252
Siamese Ponds	113,674	125,574
Silver Lake	105,814	117,010
West Canada Lakes	169,695	219,150
Wild Rivers	—	72,480
Wilderness Total	<u>1,038,874</u>	<u>1,622,135</u>
Saint Regis Canoe Area	18,606	28,343
Wilderness and Canoe Area Total	<u>1,057,480</u>	<u>1,659,694</u>

Appendix C

Boundary Descriptions: Bob Marshall Great Wilderness

Grasse River Drainage

The upper watershed of the South Branch of the Grasse River, from NY 3 south, was included in Bob Marshall's original inventory. The area is wild and remote, and its timber productivity is generally low to moderate. It is largely boreal in composition and includes the immense Massawepie mire, a peatland of international significance. NY 3 is generally used for the proposed boundary, although the Boy Scout Camp at Massawepie Lake is excluded as is the developable

area immediately west of Childwold, and the dam and building area at the outlet of Grasse River Flow. Dead Creek was chosen as the most suitable ecological and administrative boundary on the east to insure the total integrity of the Grasse River drainage. Dead Creek was used as the boundary from its headwaters to just below the community of Conifer where a major tributary of Dead Creek was used to tie in to County Route 75 and NY 3.



Dave Dwyer

Boundary Descriptions: Bob Marshall Great Wilderness

Cranberry Lake

All major tributaries to Cranberry Lake are included in the proposal including the Main Branch of the Oswegatchie River above Wanakena, which presently forms the heart of the Five Ponds Wilderness. These lands are now mostly in state ownership.

Little River Drainage

Although the Little River would have made an appropriate ecological and administrative boundary, it was decided that the woods road from Aldrich to Streeter Lake, and the snowmobile trail from Aldrich to Star Lake via Streeter Lake, could be kept open without threatening the integrity of the proposed wilderness. Therefore, this public access system was used as the boundary from Youngs Road south of Star Lake to the community of Aldrich. The use of this boundary has the unfortunate consequence, however, of excluding a small portion of the Tamarack Creek drainage basin from the wilderness. Most of this watershed is presently within the Five Ponds Wilderness. The amount to be excluded from the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness should be kept to a minimum and include only that small portion immediately north and east of Streeter Lake.

The wild character and ecological value of the Dry Timber Lake and Gulf Stream areas west of Aldrich are extraordinarily high. These areas should thus be incorporated into the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness. It is proposed that the wilderness boundary follow the state land boundary along the south side of Township 12 immediately west of the community of Aldrich to the southeast corner of Lot 79, at which point the boundary should turn north following the east boundary of Lots 79 and 78 to the intersection with Gulf Stream. The boundary should then follow the north bank of Gulf Stream southward to the Forest Preserve boundary; follow the southern boundary of Townships 11 and 12 to the public snowmobile trail at the southern boundary of Lot 135; and follow this trail south to the Lewis County line at the northwestern corner of Lot 19 in Macomb's Purchase Great Tract Number 4.

Middle Branch of the Oswegatchie River Drainage

In northern Lewis County, the Fish Creek and Palmer Creek drainages were studied separately from the upstream portion of the Middle Branch of the Oswegatchie River watershed. It was determined that the entire Fish Creek drainage east of Bryants Bridge

Road should be included in the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness as the link between the Dry Timber Lake area discussed above and the Middle Branch drainage which is the heart of the proposed wilderness. This entire drainage can be encompassed by following the property line of the (former) Diamond International Company lands from the Lewis County-St. Lawrence County boundary southward to the Bryants Bridge Road. The road should then be the boundary to the Bryants Bridge crossing of the Middle Branch. From this point upstream the entire Middle Branch of the Oswegatchie River should be incorporated into the Wilderness to preserve the area's ecological integrity. Immediately below Bryants Bridge, Palmer Creek enters the Middle Branch from the south; this extensive watershed should be included in the wilderness in its entirety. However, in view of the impact such a decision would have on the local forest products industry, it was decided to recommend excluding the Palmer Creek drainage from the wilderness if the State could acquire a conservation easement on this drainage — thereby ensuring that these lands would never be subdivided or developed, and that public access would be provided.

Public motorized access should be limited to the Middle Branch-Long Pond main haul road, although the entire drainage should be open to non-motorized public use. The wilderness boundary in this area would follow the watershed divide between Palmer Creek and the Middle Branch of the Oswegatchie River drainages. For administrative ease this could be accomplished by woods roads, survey lines, and town or county lines so long as no portion of the Middle Branch of the Oswegatchie drainage is excluded from the Wilderness. It is suggested that the town line between Diana and Croghan be used as the boundary eastward from the main haul road to the county line and the Lewis-Herkimer County line then become the boundary southward to the divide between the Middle Branch and the West Branch of the Oswegatchie River, which is also the divide between the Palmer Creek and Deer Creek drainage. At this point the county line should be followed to Deer Creek (aka Trout Lake Creek) at which point it should follow Deer Creek to Trout Pond.

West Branch of the Oswegatchie River Drainage

Continuing to use the Lewis-Herkimer County line as the Bob Marshall Great Wilderness boundary will place all of the West Branch of the Oswegatchie River upstream from the end of Long Pond town road within the Wilderness. This is possible because of the



The Adirondack Council



Founded in 1975, the Adirondack Council is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the Adirondack Park through public education, advocacy, and legal action when necessary. The Council is funded entirely by membership and private foundations. Membership information is available from the Council at Box D-2, Elizabethtown, New York, 12932.

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2020 VISION

Fulfilling the Promise of the Adirondack Park

2020 VISION is a series of reports setting forth a vision for the Adirondack Park of the year 2020 and beyond. Subjects include biological diversity, wilderness and wild forest (the two main categories of Adirondack Forest Preserve), lakes and lakeshores, recreational road and river corridors, economics, and park management. Emerging from these studies will be a specific and comprehensive plan for the Adirondack Park. If implemented by the State, the plan will guarantee the preservation and ecological integrity of this superb natural resource.

2020 VISION, VOLUME 2
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