



ADIRONDACK COUNCIL
Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness

SPRING 2008

Forest Preserve: Asset or Liability?

As an advocacy organization, the Adirondack Council has long recognized that perceptions often form reality, regardless of the myths and misinformation used to form them. Two opposing perceptions in the Adirondack Park have formed the traditional political battle lines. There are some who view the Adirondack Park as a liability, while others look upon it as an asset to local communities.

The people who perceive the Park as a liability have voiced their concerns in bumper stickers, demands for a moratorium on future state land acquisition, or in calls for the abolition of the Adirondack Park Agency because it is destroying the local economy. These actions, while cathartic, fail to solve the very real problem of the survival of small Adirondack communities in the face of rapidly changing global, national and state economic dynamics.

Those who perceive the Park as an economic asset, like the Adirondack Council, are attempting to change the tenor of the debate. A group that started with three, and then grew to a core of seven, initiated the Common Ground Alliance. The coalition is composed of local elected officials, economic development not-for-profit organizations, environmental not-for-profits, and academic and business leaders. We are attempting to identify and implement solutions that benefit the Park's communities, their economies and the environment. As one of the Alliance members stated, "This is not about divorcing the environment from economic development. This is about a marriage of the two that will produce sustainable Adirondack communities."

Over the past year, while working with these diverse voices in the Park, I have grown increasingly optimistic as the Common Ground Alliance has produced some tangible results. Last summer the core group organized a meeting with 150 participants to develop a *Blue Print for the Blue Line* that outlined priority issues and possible solutions. The state recognized our efforts and committed \$1 million in "Smart Growth" grants to Adirondack communities. Also, Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis announced a planning initiative titled a "Partnership for People and the Park." Another outstanding result is an Adirondack Council-supported Conway School of Landscape Design graduate student project, *People in the Park: A Toolkit for Fostering Vibrant Adirondack Communities* that assessed the natural, built, human and social capital of the Park and presented forward-looking, innovative, and do-able ideas that Adirondack communities can implement with their own resources.

Momentum for positive change is building due to the efforts of all of us who are passionate about the Adirondacks and want to see thriving local communities within this incredible wilderness setting. Your ideas and support for the Adirondack Council are a vital part of this exciting change that is underway in the Park. From the entire Board and Staff of the Adirondack Council, our sincere thanks for your support. I hope you will enjoy all the Adirondacks have to offer this summer.

Brian L. Houseal
Executive Director



On the Cover: Renowned for its spectacular scenery, varied wildlife habitat and recreational value to paddlers, anglers and rafters, the Hudson River Gorge is part of the 161,000 acres acquired by the Adirondack Nature Conservancy from Finch, Pruyn & Co. of Glens Falls.
Photo by Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

Newsletter Photos by Adirondack Council Staff unless otherwise noted.

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

Newsletter design by Sheri Amsel

Plan Announced for Finch Lands

In mid February, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Nature Conservancy (TNC) reached an agreement on the protection plan for more than 131,000 acres of land TNC purchased last summer from timber company Finch, Pruyn & Co. These lands are within the towns of Newcomb, Indian Lake, North Hudson, Minerva and Long Lake.

The agreement was developed after extensive consultation with local government officials, leaseholders and environmental advocates. It is designed to achieve a balance between the environmental benefits of preserving this extraordinary land and local economic development and recreational needs.

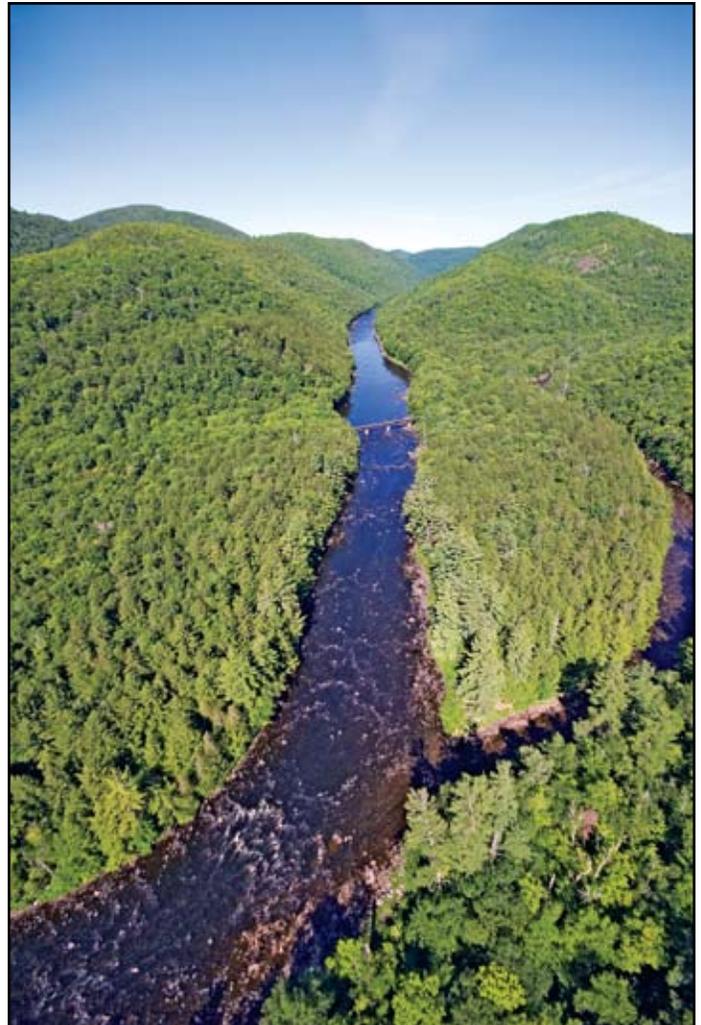
DEC has agreed to purchase approximately 58,000 acres and add them to the Forest Preserve. These lands include the Hudson River Gorge, OK Slip Falls, Boreas Ponds, the Essex Chain of Lakes, and other lands needed to complete the Wild Rivers Wilderness proposed by the Adirondack Council nearly 20 years ago. Some of the most sensitive and unique ecosystems are found on those parcels. For details on the Wild Rivers Wilderness, see Volume 2 of 2020 VISION at www.adirondackcouncil.org.

In developing the agreement for the future of another 27,000 acres, the Nature Conservancy said it will continue outreach efforts with other communities that have smaller parcels involved in the transaction, as well as with other stakeholders.

According to TNC, the former Finch holdings contain some of the wildest land remaining in the Adirondacks and are home to some of the state's most impressive plant and animal diversity. A biological survey conducted in 2001, found 95 significant plant species, 37 of which are rare in New York and 30 that are rare or uncommon in the Adirondacks.

DEC will now conduct an appraisal to determine the value of the land to be added to the Forest Preserve and easement property in order to make a formal contract offer to TNC. The deal is expected to close some time in 2010 or 2011. In the meantime, TNC has agreed to pay full property taxes to local governments even though it is a tax-exempt organization.

More details on the agreement, including maps, can be found at: www.adirondackcouncil.org/FinchDeal.html.



Hudson River in the heart of the former Finch Pruyn lands.

Photo by Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.



Essex Chain of Lakes is a key component of the Wild Rivers Wilderness Area, first proposed by the Adirondack Council in 1988.

Photo by Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

APA Keeps Snowmobile Mileage Cap, DEC Lowers Estimate of Current Miles

In March, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) reinterpreted its definition of a snowmobile trail in an effort to create additional room for the construction of new trails on Adirondack Forest Preserve lands.

The APA said it had been making a mistake since at least 1989, when it confirmed that there were 848.8 miles of snowmobile trails on public forest lands in the Park. Then in March 2008, on the advice of the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the APA said that there were really only 766 miles of Forest Preserve snowmobile trails.

The DEC advised that the Agency should never have counted seasonal-use highways, old rail corridors, or current travel corridors such as the 122-mile-long Adirondack Rail Road when it first counted the mileage. The APA Board of Commissioners agreed. This reinterpretation allows the DEC room to construct up to 82 miles of additional trails at the behest of local governments and an increasingly well-funded snowmobile lobby.

The APA's decision was a departure from its previous

positions, in which it stated, with numbers from DEC as recent as two years ago, that there were as many as 1,400 miles of snowmobile trails on the Forest Preserve, more than 500 miles above the allowable cap. The State Land Master Plan plainly states that there shall be no material increase in snowmobile trail mileage on the Forest Preserve.

The Adirondack Council stated that if the APA believes there are only 766 miles of snowmobile trails on the Forest Preserve, then the Master Plan demands that the cap be 766 as well, not 848. Only two of the 11 Commissioners agreed and voted against the new cap. The mileage cap was approved and set at 848 miles, with the justification that this guidance is needed for future Forest Preserve unit management planning.

Unfortunately, the decision will allow the expansion of trails at a time when there is no comprehensive, Park-wide trail plan in place. Piecemeal additions of new trails since 1989 is what pushed the actual mileage far beyond the original cap.

DEC's ATV Ban Still Awaits Action

After this issue was shelved by the last two Governors, the Adirondack Council is urging Gov. David Paterson to take the final step toward eliminating the single most destructive form of recreation on the Adirondack Forest Preserve – all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

In 2004, the state announced it was closing all roads in the Adirondack Forest Preserve to ATV traffic, citing excessive damage to the roads and off-road areas throughout the Park as the reason.

The ban was one of the final and finest acts of former NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Erin Crotty. The Adirondack Council and others took hundreds of digital photographs of specific areas of the Park that had been destroyed by ATVs. The damage included widespread vandalism of roads and trail markers, state signs, barriers, gates and trailhead registers.

The ban was challenged in court by the Black River Valley Four Wheeler Club, who lost their case in March 2007 after the judge determined the decision was a rational one made by the DEC Commissioner.

In the spring of 2005, DEC took the next step and drafted an ATV policy which essentially banned public use of ATVs on the Forest Preserve and other state-owned lands.

Hundreds of citizens attended a series of statewide hearings in conjunction with this draft policy on the use of ATVs on the Forest Preserve, while many more wrote letters. Public sentiment was overwhelmingly in support of the ban.

Three years later, DEC has yet to formally adopt this

policy. The Adirondack Council has asked each new Commissioner, including current Commissioner Pete Grannis, to issue the final order.

In late April, DEC did act to limit ATV access west of the Adirondacks, banning the use of "truck trails" on 40 miles of State Reforestation lands in Region 6, covering parts of St. Lawrence and Lewis counties. During one weekend preceding the ban announcement, DEC officers issued 60 tickets to ATV riders for leaving those roadways to trespass on state lands.

Council Remains Vigilant in ATV Oversight

The counties of Lewis and St. Lawrence continue to develop county-wide ATV trail system plans. Lewis County is re-creating their plan after losing a court decision in 2007 to the Adirondack Council on grounds that they did not conduct sufficient environmental assessments. Their new draft plan still relies heavily on opening roads to connect a few areas of county land, often great distances apart. This effort would violate state vehicle and traffic law. St. Lawrence County is also opening roads in order to develop their system, but on a smaller scale, in an effort to avoid litigation. The Adirondack Council continues to follow both of these projects closely and participates in seeking a resolution that does not harm the natural resources of the Park.

Tupper Lake Resort Permit Hearing Enters Mediation Phase

In March, mediation sessions began between supporters and opponents of a 700-unit resort development, proposed for the slopes of the idle Big Tupper Ski Center. The Adirondack Council is participating in the mediation sessions in an effort to scale back the size and scope of the huge development, before the start of the Adirondack Park Agency's (APA) formal hearing on the permit.

The APA must first hold a formal public hearing before denying or modifying any permit request. Such formal hearings allow both sides to present evidence and sworn testimony to support their case, while allowing each side to cross-examine the other's witnesses and refute the other's evidence.

Instead of going directly into a public hearing, the developer asked the Adirondack Park Agency's Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) for supervised mediation. This is an informal process in which the developer explores ways to shorten the formal hearing by agreeing to eliminate or alter the undesirable elements identified by the APA.

The ALJ ordered the mediation, saying he hoped both sides would work toward resolving some of the 10 unresolved major issues. Those issues, including forest fragmentation, wildlife habitat disturbance, water pollution, noise, lack of financing, and others, were established over a year ago by the APA Board of Commissioners, who ordered the formal hearing.

The Adirondack Council, a group of local residents, and several other environmental organizations are involved in

trying to reduce the environmental impacts of the project. The developer and a group of local business owners are also involved in the discussions. No official decisions will be made during mediation and none of the participants is allowed to disclose the details of the sessions. Only formal parties to the APA case are allowed into the sessions. At the time this newsletter went to print, other ground rules of the mediation process were being ironed out.

The resort plan is the largest residential development project ever reviewed by the Adirondack Park Agency. Construction costs are estimated at \$50 million or more.



The Adirondack Club and Resort proposes development of Mt. Morris and surrounding forest lands. Photo by Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

Clinton, Schumer, McHugh and Arcuri Fight for Acid Rain Research Money

US Sen. Charles Schumer, D-NY, and US Rep. John McHugh, R-Pierrepont Manor, led an effort late last year to restore vital acid rain research money cut from the federal budget by the Bush Administration. This year they were joined in their efforts by US Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-NY and US Rep. Michael Arcuri, R-Utica.

The US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) budget contains more than \$5 million for two major research efforts. One study examines trends in ambient air quality and the other studies the impact of air pollution on lakes, ponds and rivers. Both would have been curtailed or shut down due to the budget cuts last year.

Rep. McHugh led an effort to restore the money in the House version of the EPA's budget bill. He received permission from Democratic leaders to amend the bill on the floor of the House - an atypical move - despite the fact

that McHugh is not a member of the majority. Arcuri has partnered with McHugh to circulate a letter calling on the House Appropriations Committee to restore the cuts again this year.

In the Senate, Clinton took the first steps last summer by circulating a letter to her colleagues asking for their support for the EPA's acid rain programs. In late December, Schumer called on the Senate to restore the funding. After the rest of the Senate agreed to keep the programs alive, he called for the EPA to spend the funds on the monitoring programs.

The Bush Administration has already proposed cutting these programs again in the Fiscal Year 2009 budget. All four lawmakers are working to restore the funding again by sending letters to their budget committees to ask that the money be added back into the budget.

Council to Participate in First Regional Greenhouse Gas Auction

New York and other states participating in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) have announced that the first carbon dioxide (CO₂) allowance auction will be held September 10, 2008 with the second quarterly auction on December 17. As of yet, New York has not finalized the state regulation of the RGGI program and anticipates participating in the second auction.

RGGI is an agreement between the governors of 10 Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic States to reduce emissions from power plants by committing to limit the amount of allowable CO₂, the principal greenhouse gas emitted by power plants. This agreement will help to counter the threat of global climate change and result in improved air quality as well as health and environmental benefits.

The participating states in the RGGI program, which include New York, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Vermont, will be utilizing a market-based “cap-and-trade” system to achieve reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

A regional cap has been set at 188 million tons of carbon dioxide, which is the amount of CO₂ power plants expect to discharge in 2009. Starting in 2015, the cap would be reduced by 2.5 percent annually, ultimately resulting in a

16 percent emissions reduction.

New York will auction off nearly 100 percent of its allowances, roughly 64 million tons. The proceeds will be used to finance energy efficiency and clean energy projects across the state. Making polluters pay for allowances and the ability to emit carbon dioxide should bring \$250 million to the state annually for these worthwhile programs and reduce electricity consumption.

The Adirondack Council intends to participate in the auction to permanently retire from the market as many carbon allowances as possible, so they will not be used to create climate-changing emissions. This will build upon the Council’s successful acid rain retirement program, where over 7,500 tons of sulfur dioxide credits already have been retired so that they cannot be used to cause acid rain in the Adirondacks.

In the upcoming auctions, the CO₂ allowances will only be sold in 1,000 unit blocks, making it difficult for the average person to participate. The Council plans to retire them in smaller amounts, making it possible to retire credits to celebrate a birthday or other special occasion. The Council hopes to expand this program to a national level, if and when Congress orders a similar auction.

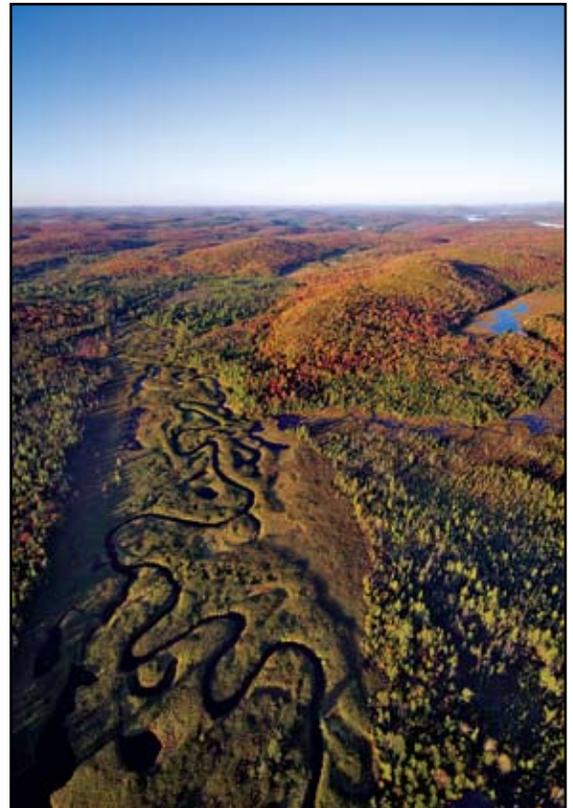
Florida Land Investor Buys Lassiter Tracts

In early April, Rayonier, Inc. purchased more than 53,800 acres of former Lassiter Properties timberland in the northwest Adirondacks for \$19.1 million. Rayonier stated that it will manage the lands according to sustainable forestry principles. The sale includes parcels in St. Lawrence, Lewis, Franklin and Clinton counties.

Many of these lands are rare, low-elevation boreal forest that shelters a wide variety of plant and animal species found nowhere else in New York State. Major parcels include 21,020 acres in the towns of Diana and Croghan, including a section of the Middle Branch of the Oswegatchie River; 18,351 acres in the towns of Colton and Hopkinton, including shoreline on the West Branch of the St. Regis River; and 3,906 acres west of County Route 56.

Almost two-thirds of the property is under a state conservation easement, which permanently protects it from development, while allowing continued timber harvesting and public recreation. The Adirondack Council will urge Rayonier and state officials to reach an agreement on protecting the remaining lands.

The Lassiter purchase brings Rayonier’s total holdings in New York to more than 129,000 acres. Much of its existing Adirondack holdings will also be subject to a conservation easement. Rayonier, a real estate investment trust, is based in Jacksonville, Florida and owns, leases or manages 2.5 million acres of land worldwide.



This Adirondack forest and the Oswegatchie River are part of the proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness. Photo by Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

Pending Lawsuit Won't Stop State from Purchasing New Forest Preserve

This winter, the Adirondack Council successfully urged the Governor to reject a request from two state legislators who wanted the state to stop purchasing land in the Adirondack Park. The lawmakers were concerned that the state's tax payments on Forest Preserve lands have been endangered by a pending court decision.

With little fanfare in November 2007, an acting Supreme Court Justice in Chautauqua County struck down all of the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) property tax payments to local governments (Dillenburg v. State of New York).

In reviewing a complaint from a town supervisor, the judge found that state tax payments on "reforestation lands" outside the Adirondack and Catskill Parks were unfairly administered. The state pays property taxes to towns and counties for some, but not all, state forest lands. The judge explained, however, that the tax payments on Forest Preserve lands were rational and fair. The state pays approximately \$70 million per year in Forest Preserve property taxes to Adirondack localities.

Rather than strike down just the "reforestation" section of the law, the judge voided all state tax payments on forest land, including those payments on Adirondack Forest

Preserve. However, he held the execution of his order until the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court confirms or rejects his decision.

Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward, R-Willsboro and Sen. Elizabeth Little, R-Queensbury, who represent northern Adirondack districts, called on Governor Spitzer to stop buying land in the Adirondack Park until the court case is decided.

The Council argued that the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court could take a year or more to make a decision in this case and during that time, the state should continue to make tax payments. The Governor agreed and DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis confirmed this in a message to Adirondack local governments in January and again at an Adirondack Council event later that week.

The Adirondack Council has offered to assist Attorney General Andrew Cuomo in his defense of the state's payments on Forest Preserve lands. The Council is currently working with local towns, environmental groups, and landowner organizations to perfect an Amicus Curiae brief that will bolster the state's case for continuing to pay taxes on Forest Preserve lands as it has done since 1886. An appeal is expected to be argued in September.

THE BUFFALO NEWS

OPINION

Sunday, January 7, 2008

Editorial

Protect Adirondack Forest

Local tax case threatens past practices, but state should buy acres while it can.

Just when the state has a chance to lock up some 70,000 acres of good forest land in the northern end of New York, a court ruling in the southwestern corner threatens to throw a monkey wrench in the whole deal. The state ought to buy the land anyway.

The Adirondack Council, a conservationist organization that watches this sort of thing, has noticed that two private owners have put up for sale some 100,000 acres within the boundaries of the Adirondack Park. The group has petitioned the state Department of Environmental Conservation to put in a bid for the 70,000 acres of that total that aren't already covered by state-held conservation easements.

About half of the 6 million acres within the park's boundaries are in private hands. So far, development pressure there is wonderfully slight, with uses mostly limited to relatively low-impact logging or outdoor recreation.

Still, increasing the portion of the park that is held by the state as forever wild natural wilderness is a good idea. That's particularly true for the land now on the block. A lot of it is what the naturalists call "boreal forest." That's a sort that is rare this far south, supports many endangered species, is damp enough that it rarely burns and has the potential to capture and hold a lot of

the airborne carbon that is thought to be responsible for global climate change.

Of course, part of the reason why development pressure is relatively slight is the fact that New York has, for more than 100 years, had the generous and unusual habit of waiving its sovereign immunity and allowing the towns and villages of the Adirondacks and Catskills to tax state-owned land.

That justified generosity — it means that the host communities of those parks can afford that honor — is threatened by a ruling handed down last month by a state court down in Chautauqua County. Noticing that the state doesn't allow the local taxation of all of its land, particularly a recreation area in the unhappy Town of Arkwright, Supreme Court Judge Timothy J. Walker told the state it couldn't pay such taxes to local governments anywhere.

And that's why at least one Adirondack-area lawmaker — Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward, R-Willsboro — understandably wants a freeze on all state land purchases until the tax issue is resolved.

The matter should be resolved, and in a way that doesn't pull such a huge portion of tax base away from some communities that don't have much else in that department. But that's the sort of thing that can take a long time, especially if responsible leaders have to beat off the many lawmakers who will want the opportunity to add any number of state-owned nooks and crannies to the tax rolls.

The state should go ahead and bid on most, if not all, of the offered acreages in the Adirondacks by the Jan. 11 deadline.

The Legislature makes tax policy just about every year. Nobody's making any more boreal forest.

Environment Fares Well in State Budget

While the final state budget was over a week late, the environmental spending bill passed both houses of the Legislature on April 4. The centerpiece of the environment, the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), was funded at an all-time high of \$255 million, \$5 million more than what was proposed by former Governor Spitzer in January.

Funding for the land acquisition category in the EPF was increased to a record level of \$66.5 million, up from \$55 million last year. These funds are desperately needed to finance the growing list of land acquisition opportunities in the Adirondacks. The Legislature also rejected a proposed decrease in money for invasive species. Fortunately, this program was restored to last year's level of \$5 million.

Unfortunately, not all of the news on the EPF was good. The Legislature did accept the former Governor's idea of sweeping \$125 million in cash out of the fund to help pay the general obligations of the state. While both houses had considered a five-year repayment plan for the \$447 million which has been taken out of the fund since 2002, this plan was not agreed upon in the final budget deal.

A new environmental initiative, courtesy of Senator Betty Little, is a \$200,000 road salt study in the Adirondacks. This study will help determine the long-term effects of road salt on the Lake George area. We anticipate that other towns throughout the Park will benefit from the results of the study as they try to lower costs of clearing roads while limiting environmental damage.



Governor David Paterson took office on March 17th and managed the successful passage of the state budget less than a month later. In April, the Governor participated in a call-in show with Martha Foley of North Country Public Radio and answered questions of concern to callers in the North Country. You can hear his responses to questions about the Environmental Protection Fund, land acquisition and the Adirondack Park Agency at: www.northcountrypublicradio.org



*Governor
David Paterson*

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) was given four new staff, three of which will work to combat invasive species across the state. These new hires will complement existing staff who were reassigned last year to create a new invasive species office within DEC.

After seeing an increase of five new staff last year, the Adirondack Park Agency's (APA) budget remained the same this year, with a staffing level of 72. However, the APA did not see any reduction in funding, as most state agencies did in this year's budget.

Another bright spot for the environment was the creation of a new \$95 million State Parks Capital Initiative Program. This money will be used for the upgrade of 100 different parks and historic sites across the state. Almost \$8 million will be directed towards the rehabilitation of DEC campgrounds.

Your Efforts Yield Results

Thank you to all of our members and friends who wrote to the Environmental Conservation Chairs in the state Assembly and Senate on the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). Your letters had a big impact and the results speak for themselves—\$5 million more for the EPF when most funding is being reduced and an additional \$500,000 for land acquisition over what had been proposed just months ago. Your hard work paid off!

THE ADIRONDACK
COUNCIL IS



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Thank you to Adirondack Council members who contribute through their Earth Share workplace giving campaigns. We appreciate your interest in protecting the Adirondack Park and your support for the Adirondack Council's conservation and advocacy efforts. CFC # 22101

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info@earthshare.org

Legislative Session Kicks into High Gear

With the conclusion of the state budget process, attention in Albany turns toward other legislative initiatives. The Adirondack Council will continue to promote a number of measures that will improve the environment not only of the Adirondack Park, but the entire state. Some of the programs which the Council will be supporting include further reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, extension of the returnable container law, and inspections and repair of septic systems.

With the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative about to be finalized in New York, we know that much more needs to be done. A bill has recently been introduced in the legislature which, beginning in 2015, slowly reduces the state's greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

This is the same level of cuts which the Adirondack Council has endorsed in federal legislation and is advocated for by the Step It Up campaign (now known as 1Sky) started by Bill McKibben. McKibben will be awarded the Conservationist of the Year Award and speak to guests at the Council's annual celebration on July 19. The United States Climate Action Partnership (USCAP), a coalition of national and international businesses and environmental groups, also calls for similar reductions on the same time line.

During budget negotiations, the Bigger, Better Bottle Bill was once again left out of the final agreement, even though the Governor's Executive budget and the Assembly's budget both included it. It is projected to bring an estimated \$100 million back to the state from unclaimed deposits.

The Senate and Governor's office have both expressed interest in continuing the discussion about what can be done to ensure that bottles and cans which currently do not have a deposit are recycled in a responsible manner. The

Adirondack Council supported the original "bottle bill" in 1982 as a means of litter reduction in the Adirondack Park and we continue to support real measures which will make sure new variations of the waste stream are also dealt with in a reasonable way.

A third issue the Council will continue to focus on is the need to test septic systems and upgrade those that are failing. Legislation has been around for several years which would require the inspection of a septic system at the time of property transfer, when other home inspections are taking place. We will continue to work with the sponsors and other involved agencies to come up with creative ways to help homeowners pay for any necessary repairs or replacement of their system.



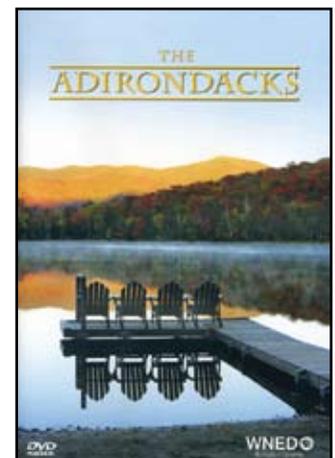
The Adirondack Council participated in the 2008 Bottle Bill Lobby Day. Pictured from left to right: Peter Sobol, Senator Kenneth LaValle, Peter Sidoti, Assemblyman Fred Theile, Adirondack Council Legislative Associate Alanah Keddell.

Documentary Premieres: *The Adirondacks* on PBS!

This spring marked the premiere of *The Adirondacks*, a two-hour, high definition movie that tracks the history and beauty of the Adirondack Park's protected landscapes through each of the four seasons. The movie is partly underwritten by the Adirondack Council and created by WNED-TV, PBS Buffalo.

The Adirondacks had its first showing at Paul Smith's College in April, and debuted on national PBS television stations in May. It will play many times this spring and summer on PBS affiliates around the United States. Check your local listings for dates and times. It will remain in the PBS program rotation for all of 2008 and beyond.

It is the first Adirondack documentary recorded in high-definition video, making the most of the Park's majestic beauty and wildness for viewers who might never get a chance to visit.



New Brochure Highlights Land Protection Priorities

The photo and graphics on this page are part of the Council's new brochure, *Adirondack Park Lands at Risk*, which was designed to help demonstrate some of the opportunities for open space protection throughout the Park. Currently, there are hundreds of millions of dollars in land acquisition projects available that the state should fund, including over 260,000 acres in the Adirondack Park. The full brochure can be viewed on our website at www.adirondackcouncil.org.



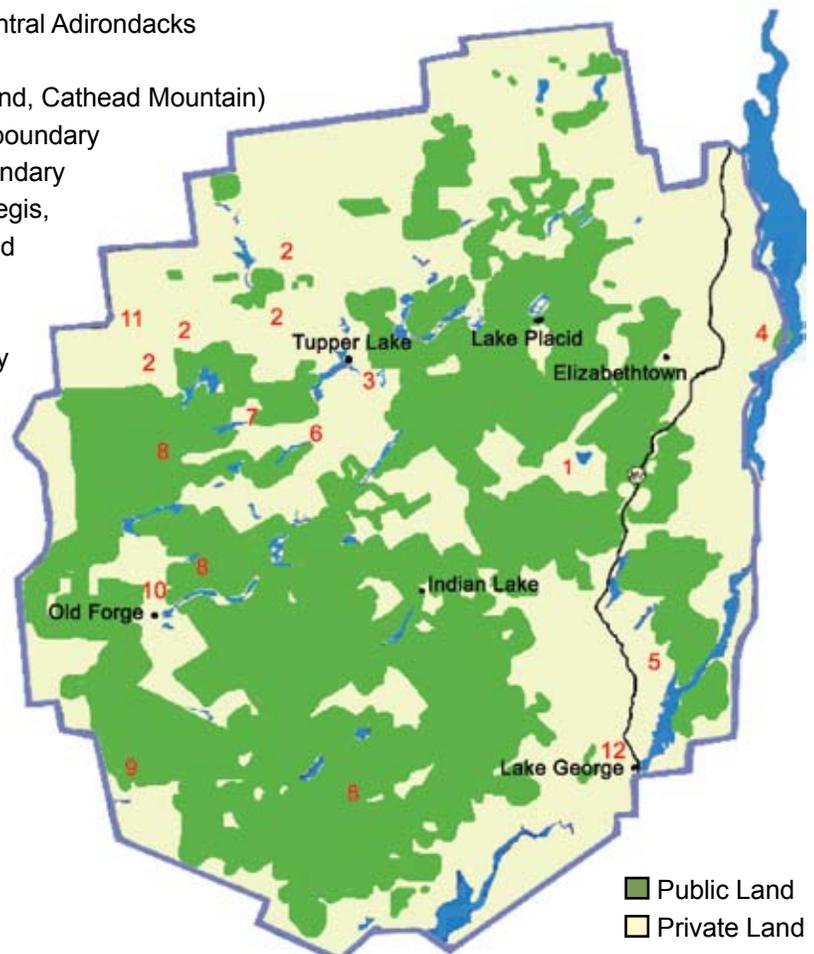
Follensby Pond. Place of the famous 1858 Philosopher's Camp. It inspired masterworks such as William Stillman's painting *Philosophers' Camp in the Adirondacks* and Ralph Waldo Emerson's poem *The Adirondacs*.
Photo by Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

Adirondack Park Top 12 High-Priority Lands at Risk

- 1 Hudson River watershed (former Finch, Pruyn & Co. lands)
- 2 Low-elevation boreal forests (Lassiter, Clerical Medical)
- 3 Follensby Pond, Raquette River watershed
- 4 Lake Champlain watershed, including Split Rock Wildway
- 5 Lake George watershed, especially West Creek and Finch lands
- 6 Whitney Park, future Wilderness lands in west-central Adirondacks
- 7 Bog River/Beaver River headwaters
- 8 Wilderness inholdings (e.g., Buck Pond, Mays Pond, Cathead Mountain)
- 9 Black River corridor from North Lake to the Park boundary
- 10 Moose River, from Rondaxe Lake to the Park boundary
- 11 Northern Flow River corridors (Deer, Grass, St. Regis, Oswegatchie Rivers and the surrounding proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness)
- 12 Southeastern Foothills; a transition zone between the Adirondack High Peaks and the Hudson Valley

For More Information:

See NYS Open Space Conservation Plan; or go to: www.adirondackcouncil.org/2020vision2.html to see 2020 VISION Volumes 1 through 4.



Adirondack Council Helps Tupper Lake Secure \$100,000 Smart Growth Grant

The Adirondack Council's efforts to assist the Town and Village of Tupper Lake to obtain a large state planning grant paid off in March when Tupper Lake was awarded a \$100,000 Smart Growth Grant.

The Council covered the costs of community planning consultant, Melissa McManus, who helped the town secure funding for the community's future development. McManus will also help town and village officials complete the formal plan.

Part of the plan includes developing a "visual identity" for the Town and Village of Tupper Lake and concept designs for streetscape and waterfront projects.



Park Street in Tupper Lake

Environmental Funding to Help Economic Growth in the Park

Gov. David A. Paterson's grant to Tupper Lake was part of a Park-wide award of \$1 million total in Smart Growth grants for 18 projects. These grants came from the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), the main source of environmental money in the state budget. Each one is designed to guide future development activity so it consumes the fewest natural resources possible while providing long-term economic benefits.

Essex County will receive \$220,000 with \$100,000 going toward the Essex County Destination Master Plan, to help develop tourism into a sustainable, year-round economy. The other \$120,000 will go to the county in partnership with the Adirondack Community Housing Trust to expand low-cost housing in hamlets throughout Essex County.

In addition, the Town of Brighton received a grant for \$46,400 in partnership with the Adirondack Watershed Institute. This money will be spent on the Brighton Smart Growth Assessment Project. The Town of Wilmington received \$50,000 for an Economic Impact Feasibility Study on plans to build a community center, municipal offices, a fly fishing museum and a historical society.

Other grants include: \$42,600 to the Town of Indian Lake to plan the re-opening of the Indian Lake Theater; \$35,000 to the town of Chester to make plans for retaining existing affordable housing and establishing new affordable housing opportunities for working families; \$50,000 to the town of Bolton for a hamlet of Bolton Landing sustainability plan; and, \$25,000 to Stony Creek for a hamlet revitalization study.

The entire list of Smart Growth grants can be found at www.adirondackcouncil.org/SmartGrowth.html.

Council Executive Director Named to NYS Smart Growth Panel for Park

In March, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis appointed Adirondack Council Executive Director Brian L. Houseal to an 11-member steering committee created to identify the critical issues affecting the Adirondacks and provide input for the state's investment in environmentally friendly, sustainable economic development.

The announcement came as the state announced \$1 million in Smart Growth grants to 18 communities across the Adirondack Park. The new Adirondack planning group is called the Partnerships for People and the Park.

The steering committee will be chaired by Bill Farber, President of the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages. Other appointees include Elizabethtown Town Supervisor Noel Merrihew III; Webb Town Supervisor Robert Moore; Bill Johnston of the Adirondack Community Housing Trust; Executive Director Terry Martino, Adirondack North Country Association; Adirondack Community Trust Executive Director Cali Brooks; Adirondack Regional Tourism Council Executive Director Ron Ofner; Neil Murphy, President of the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and, John Mills, President of Paul Smith's College.

Bats and Biological Meltdown

An estimated, 1,000 bat species flit about our earth, from the Equatorial rainforests to the temperate deciduous forests. Nine of these flying, echo-locating mammal species inhabit New York.

Even as they are gaining the respect they deserve, the bats of New York are dying out. A mysterious malady called “White-Nose Syndrome” (WNS) is linked to the recent deaths of thousands of Little Brown, Indiana, and Big Brown bats across northern New York. Some biologists fear we’ve already lost more than 90 percent of the bats that overwinter in the Adirondacks.

The white ring around afflicted bats’ noses is thought to be associated with a fusarium mold, but it is still unknown whether the mold is a cause or a symptom of their illness. Bats with the WNS use up their fat reserves and starve or freeze to death before they can emerge from their winter hibernation.

White-nose syndrome was first discovered in New York caves in the winter of 2007 and has since spread to Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, and perhaps other eastern states. WNS could prove especially disastrous for the Indiana Bat, a species already recognized by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as endangered and 10 percent of whose population winters in New York caves and old mines. Both climate change and pesticide use have been suggested as possible culprits behind the spread of White-Nose Syndrome.

An alliance of conservation groups, including the Adirondack Council and the Center for Biological Diversity, is petitioning the USFWS and other federal agencies to “reinitiate consultation” for the Indiana Bat and three other listed Endangered bat species whose ranges are south of the Adirondacks. This means that we are asking USFWS to include the analysis of the White-Nosed Syndrome when developing opinions on proposed projects that may affect these bats, such as timber sales in National Forests. Currently, USFWS does not consider this emerging disease in its decisions.

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has asked spelunkers and the public to stay out of caves and mines while the disease is being investigated. Caving groups are supporting these voluntary closures to prevent further spread of the disease. Concerned citizens are urged to report to the DEC any unusual bat behavior, and to contact Bat Conservation International and the Center for Biological Diversity for more information.

A biological melt-down of bats would be tragic on many levels. Bats, along with birds, control populations of many of the insects that otherwise trouble us. They are indicator species telling us much about the quality of

our environment. Bats are amazingly diverse and skilled creatures, having mastered flight and sonar long before us.

For more information, visit the following websites: www.batcon.org, www.biologicaldiversity.org and www.dec.ny.gov.



Little Brown Bat in flight



Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*)



Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalists*)

Photos © Merlin D. Tuttle, Bat Conservation International

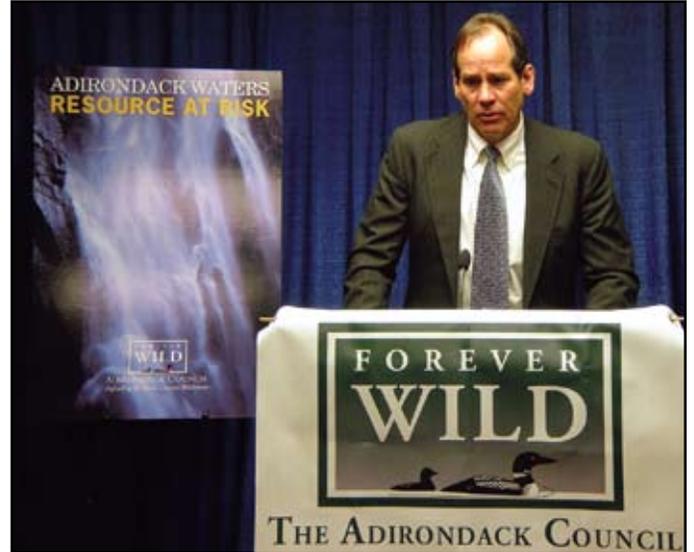
Pure Water the Focus of New Publication

On Earth Day, the Adirondack Council released its newest publication aimed at protecting and enhancing the Park's water quality. *Adirondack Waters: Resource at Risk* is a 28-page publication on the issues that affect water quality throughout the Park.

The publication outlines actions that citizens, governments and advocates can take to safeguard the incredible treasury of pure water left to us by our ancestors. With 2,800 lakes and ponds, as well as 30,000 miles of rivers, brooks and streams, the Adirondack Park is the source of most of the state's major waterways and a huge amount of its drinking water.

Park reservoirs hold back the floodwaters of the Hudson River, Raquette and Black Rivers, protecting downstream communities and creating hydro-power along the way. The Park provides the water for boat traffic on the Erie Canal and Champlain Canal, while also keeping seawater from creeping north into the drinking water filtration plant in Poughkeepsie.

Adirondack Waters is not a recounting of our failures, but a blueprint for future success. It offers advice based on one unfaltering principle that must guide all of our actions: there is no new water. An electronic copy is available at www.adirondackcouncil.org.



Adirondack Council Executive Director Brian Houseal speaks at a press conference in April about the state of water quality in the Adirondack Park. Houseal was joined in Albany by Donna Wadsworth of International Paper to unveil the Council's newest publication, "Adirondack Waters: Resource at Risk."

Adirondack Enthusiasts Gather In Boston With The Adirondack Council

An evening of shared Adirondack stories and conversation about the efforts of the Adirondack Council.

Thank you to the Lawrence, McClintock, Smith, Boardman and Dunne families for being our hosts.



Abbott Lawrence, Austin McClintock, Tiverton McClintock, and Amanda Lawrence



Laura Caputo, Ginger Lawrence, William Boardman, and Alice Boardman



Bill Boardman and Anna Boardman



Diane Fish and Mary DeGarmo



Brehon Cao-Garcia, Isaac Dale and Kelly Lawrence.

Leaving a Legacy for the Adirondacks

“Having lived in Saranac Lake as a child and then spending summers there, I have a deep appreciation for the special character of the Adirondacks. I wanted to ensure that those who came after me could enjoy this wonderful place in the same condition as I had. I felt the best way to do this was to include the Adirondack Council in my will.

The importance of the Council in protecting the integrity of the Adirondack Park cannot be overemphasized and my nine years as a board member only reinforced this belief. The Adirondack Council is the only Adirondack environmental organization with the financial resources, dedicated staff, and public education program to do this. I hope that many of our members will follow my example by providing for the Adirondack Council in their estate plans.”

— Joanne Waldron Dwyer



For more information visit www.adirondackcouncil.org or contact Diane Fish, Director of Fund Development: 1-877-873-2240 or dfish@adirondackcouncil.org.

New Adirondack Council Staff

The Adirondack Council would like to introduce the newest staff members.

James Tyler Frakes joins the staff in our Elizabethtown office as the Council’s Membership Assistant. Tyler graduated from Siena College in the spring of 2007 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Political Science. As a lifelong native of the Adirondacks, Tyler spends a majority of his free time enjoying the outdoors. He enjoys golfing, fishing, gardening, hiking in and around the Adirondacks, and sailing on Lake Champlain with his family.



*Membership Assistant,
James Tyler Frakes*

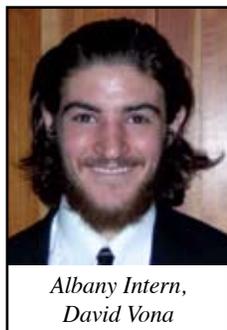
Alanah Keddell-Tuckey is the Council’s new Legislative Associate in our Albany office. She holds a Bachelor’s of Arts in Political Science with a Minor in Sociology from the State University of New York at Binghamton and a Juris Doctorate from Albany Law School. Before joining the Adirondack Council, Alanah worked as the Governmental Affairs Coordinator with the Empire State Pride Agenda. She has also served as an intern with the law firm of Malkin and Ross and with the Rensselaer County District Attorney’s office. Alanah resides in East Greenbush with her husband Sean and their two children Davin and Emerie.



Legislative Associate, Alanah Keddell-Tuckey

New Clarence Petty Interns

David Vona is one of the Council’s Clarence Petty interns working in our Albany office for the Legislative Session. He is a graduate from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a Bachelor’s Degree in Information Technology. Currently, David is finishing his work towards a Master’s of Arts in Public Administration at the Rockefeller College for Public Affairs. An avid hiker who loves the Adirondacks, David has thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail and has plans to hike the Northville-Placid Trail.



*Albany Intern,
David Vona*

Catherine Kramer is a part-time intern in the Council’s Albany office. In May, she graduated with honors from the University at Albany and the University’s Honors College with a Bachelor’s Degree in Political Science. As part of the University’s combined B.A. and M.A. program, Catherine will continue her graduate work in the fall at Albany’s Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy where she will obtain a Master’s Degree in Public Policy with a concentration in education.



*Albany intern,
Catherine Kramer*

Adirondack Park Map With Watercolor Illustrations

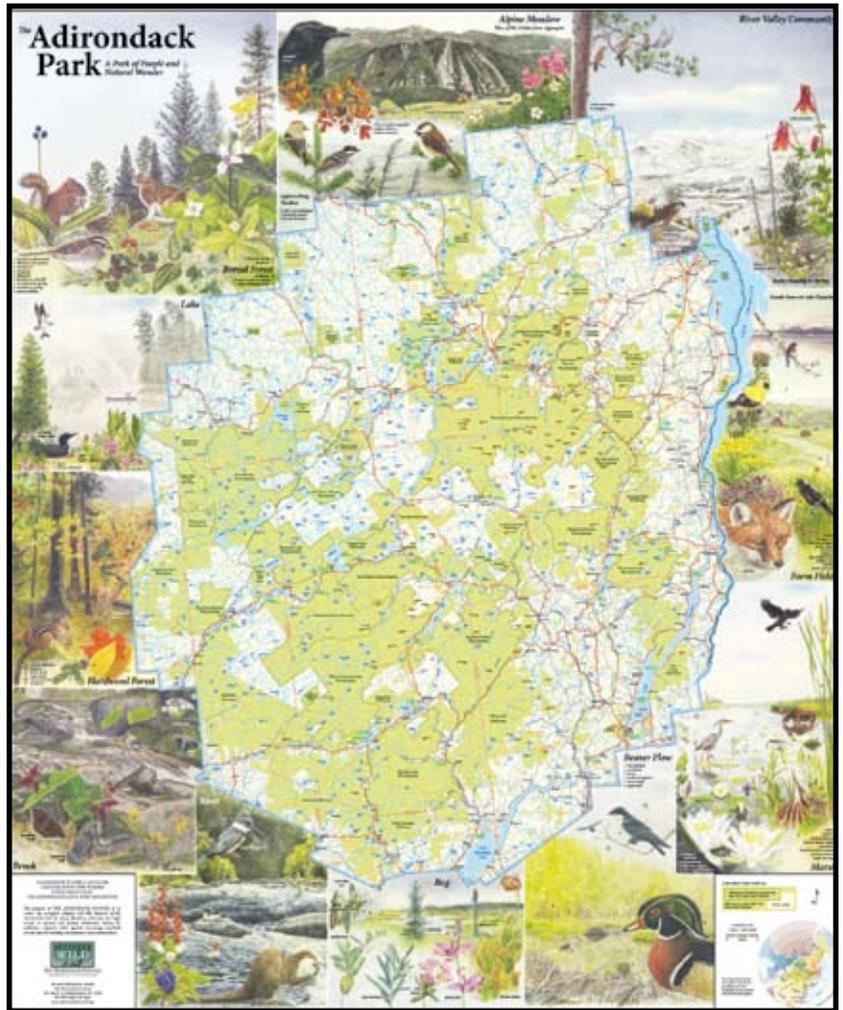
The Adirondack Council has published the 2nd Edition of its popular Adirondack Park map (35" x 43") showing public and private lands, wilderness areas, mountains, rivers, towns and highways. The map is bordered by beautiful, detailed watercolor illustrations by artist Anne Lacy depicting various habitat found in the Adirondacks: alpine meadow, river valley, marsh, bog, river, brook, hardwood forest, lake and boreal forest.

Laminated map: \$40
Unlaminated map: \$25

IT'S EASY TO PLACE AN ORDER!
Make your purchase on our secure website
at www.adirondackcouncil.org

OR
Call toll-free 1-877-873-2240
M-F 8:30 am - 5:30 pm.

Additional items are available on our website at www.adirondackcouncil.org.



HOW CAN WE BEST COMMUNICATE WITH YOU?

We want to be sure you are receiving information from the Adirondack Council in the format and frequency that's best for you. Please let us know if we can serve you better by completing the form below and sending it to us in the enclosed envelope.

- The format and frequency of information I receive is just right.
- Please add me to the Adirondack Council e-mail list (remember to add us to yours!)
My e-mail address is: _____
- I would prefer less mail: please don't send __action alerts, __updates or __special requests for support.
- I prefer to receive all my communications electronically.
- Is the format of your address correct (see back cover)? Please send us any corrections.
- If your address uses your proper name, do you have a name you would rather we use when we write to you?
Example: Dear Robert and Katherine? or Bob and Kathy?
Dear _____
- Please check if you do not want your name and address shared with any other organization.

Other comments/requests:

Questions or concerns? Please contact Membership Coordinator Kathy Kelley at 877-873-2240 or kkelley@adirondackcouncil.org.



FOREVER WILD DAY
Saturday, July 19, 2008 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Silver Bay YMCA of the Adirondacks
on the shores of Lake George

Summer sunrise on Lake George, looking south over the Narrows from Black Mountain.

Photo by Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

Come join us at Silver Bay for the day or make a weekend of it.

Enjoy guided walks and nature talks, our annual meeting, and the presentation of our Conservationist of the Year Award to environmental journalist and activist Bill McKibben.

Check our website at www.adirondackcouncil.org
for details about activities and for lodging visit www.silverbay.org.

The mission of the Adirondack Council is to ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park. Founded in 1975, the Council is a privately funded, not-for-profit organization with members in all fifty United States.

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Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness
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