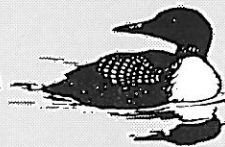




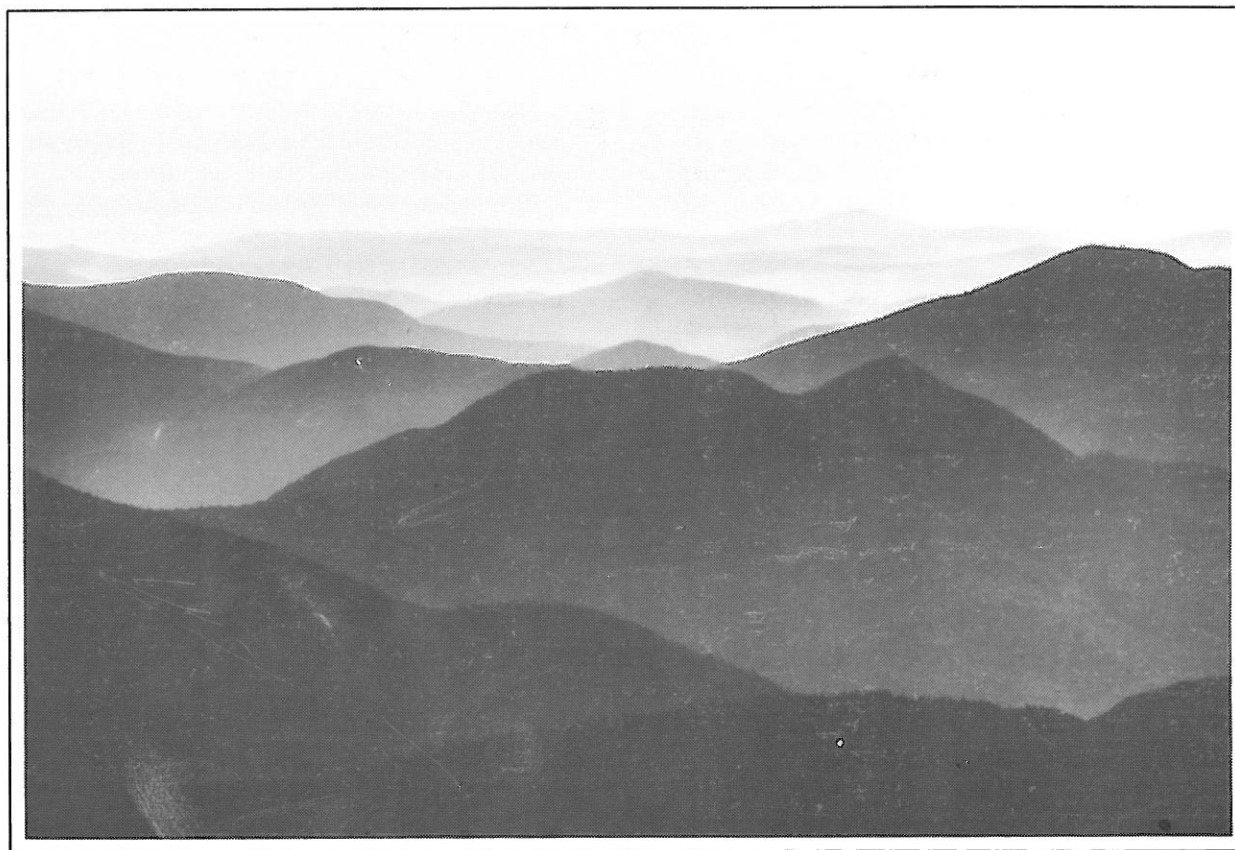
The Adirondack Council
A SPECIAL REPORT



April 1986

STATE OF THE PARK 1986

**A Review of Actions and Trends
Affecting the Adirondack Park**



THE ADIRONDACK PARK

In size, diversity and ownership pattern, the Adirondack Park is unique in the United States.

The Park contains six million acres and covers one-fifth of New York State. It is equal in size to neighboring Vermont and occupies nearly three times the acreage of Yellowstone National Park, our largest national park outside Alaska.

Some 40 percent of the Adirondack Park is publicly-owned Adirondack Forest Preserve, protected as "forever wild" by the State Constitution since 1895. The remaining 60 percent of the Adirondack Park is private land devoted principally to forestry, agriculture and open-space recreation.

The Park is home for 125,000 permanent and 90,000 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," 42 of them above 4,000 feet, nine of them 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.

The range of outdoor recreation in this superb natural setting is unparalleled in the eastern United States. The Adirondack Park offers boating of all kinds, horseback riding, camping, hiking, mountaineering, hunting, fishing, swimming, bicycling, nature photography, downhill and cross-country skiing, ice skating, ice boating, and scenic motoring on some of the loveliest highways and backroads found anywhere. There are thousands of miles of foot trails throughout the Park, and more than 1,200 miles of Adirondack rivers and streams, many navigable by canoe or kayak, receive special protection against damming and other incompatible development as part of the State's Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System.

STATE OF THE PARK REPORT

This is the Adirondack Council's fourth annual report on the state of the Adirondack Park. The report cites specific State actions, or lack of action, that affect the Adirondack Park and reflect favorably or poorly on the State entity or public official involved.

The agencies most frequently cited are:

Adirondack Park Agency, an 11-member commission, appointed by the Governor, and a staff of 45. The Agency regulates the use of the Park's private lands, totalling about 3.5 million acres, and develops policy for the Park's public lands, consisting of 2.5 million acres of State-owned Adirondack Forest Preserve.

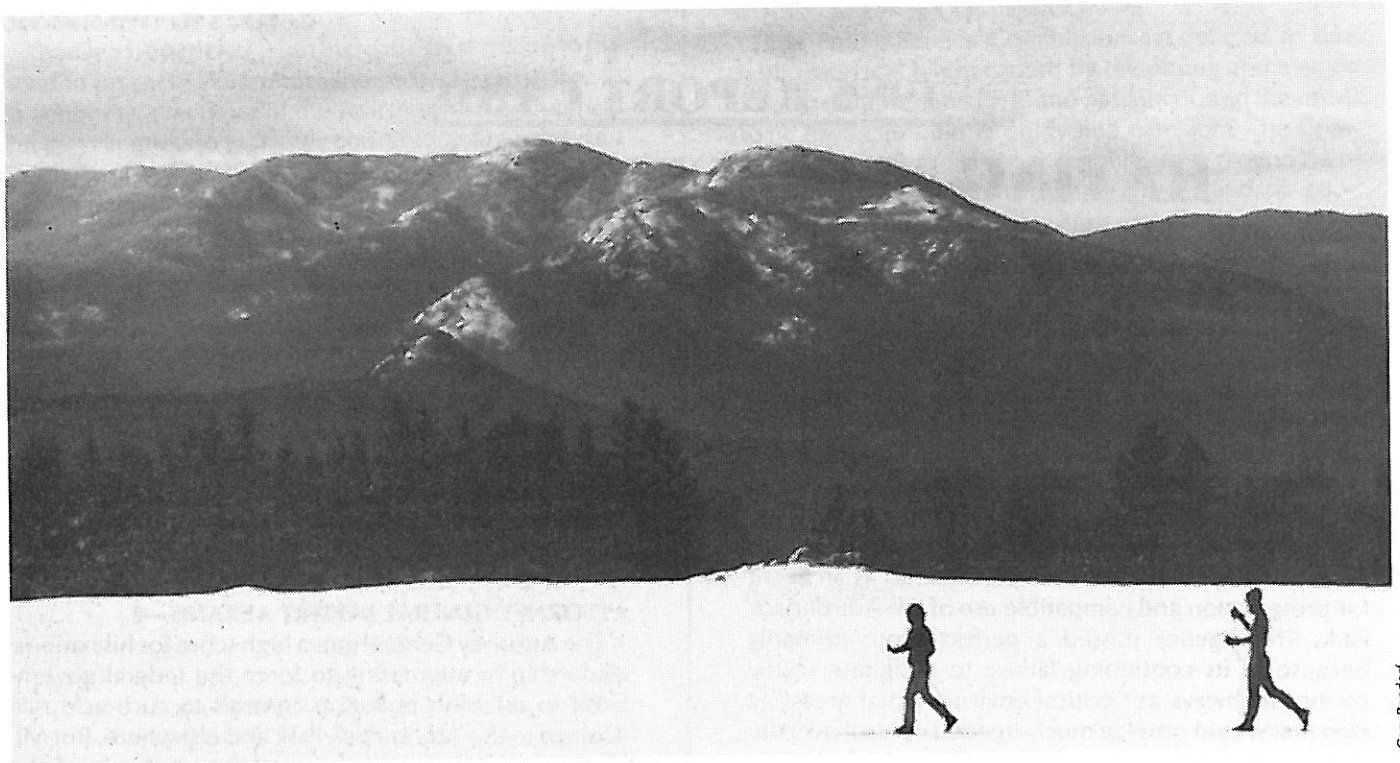
Department of Environmental Conservation, charged with the care, custody and control of the publicly-owned Adirondack Forest Preserve and the acquisition of additional Forest Preserve lands as these become available.

Other agencies that have helped or hindered the cause of Adirondack preservation will also be cited, as will the Governor and State Legislature.

This report was prepared for the Adirondack Council by George D. Davis, with editing by Richard Beamish.

Mr. Davis was staff ecologist for the Governor's Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks from 1968-71 and Director of Planning for the Adirondack Park Agency from 1971-76. He later served as Executive Director of the Wilderness Society and as National Coordinator for the RARE II study of roadless areas conducted by the U.S. Forest Service. He is currently Program Director of the Adirondack Council and Executive Director of the Adirondack Land Trust.

Cover Photo by Gary Randorf



Gary Randorf

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1986 REPORT CARD

RATING THE PUBLIC TRUSTEES OF THE ADIRONDACK PARK

On a scale of one to ten, here's how they did during the past year:

ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY—9

After a decade of inadequate leadership and sinking staff morale, the Adirondack Park Agency has come to life, assuming its legislative responsibilities as an agent for preservation and compatible use of the Adirondack Park. The Agency missed a perfect score primarily because of its continuing failure to designate scenic county highways as "critical environmental areas," a step that would provide much-needed control over disruptive roadside development.

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY—9

The State Assembly has been consistently supportive of Adirondack protection measures, including legislation to add additional river segments to the State's Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System, and legislation requiring that state development in the Adirondacks be subject to the same controls as private development.

GOVERNOR MARIO CUOMO—8

The Governor has emerged as a leading advocate of Adirondack Park protection. In 1984 and 1985, he revitalized the Adirondack Park Agency, the State entity with park-wide land use authority and primary responsibility for protecting the Park. In his January, 1986 Message to the State Legislature, the Governor called for an Environmental Bond Act that will include needed funds for acquiring additional public lands within the Adirondack Park. He also advocates a long overdue park interpretation program for the Adirondacks; inclusion of additional Adirondack rivers in the State's Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System; legislation that will subject State-sponsored development in the Park to the same land-use controls governing private development; and a clarification of current law that will enable the State to use Adirondack acquisition funds to purchase conservation easements (development rights) on private holdings that need to be maintained in their natural condition if the overall open space quality of the Adirondacks is to be preserved.

The Governor's only poor showing was 1) his support for the State's sale of the Marjorie Merriweather Post Estate (Camp Topridge), which had been given without reservation to the State and was therefore part of the

Forest Preserve, and 2) his failure to mesh a newly-created North Country Development Authority responsible for controlling the growth to be produced by the massive expansion of Fort Drum near Watertown, NY, with the existing land use controls of the Adirondack Park Agency Act.

ATTORNEY GENERAL ROBERT ABRAMS—8

The Attorney General gets a high score for his national leadership in attempting to force the federal government to establish pollution controls to curb acid rain damage to the Adirondack Park and elsewhere. But Mr. Abrams' support for the unconstitutional sale of the State-owned Camp Topridge, on Upper St. Regis Lake near the St. Regis Canoe Area, and his failure to seek adequate staff to expedite critical Adirondack Forest Preserve acquisitions, lowered his rating.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION—7

After seven long years of failing to fulfill its Adirondack responsibilities, the Department sprang into action during the past year. Under the leadership of Commissioner Henry G. Williams, the Department made important additions to the Adirondack Forest Preserve, facilitated use of biological controls in place of indiscriminate chemical spraying against blackflies and mosquitoes, removed non-conforming structures in Wilderness areas, drafted excellent management plans for several units of the Forest Preserve, and, with various private organizations, celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Adirondack Forest Preserve, a milestone in American conservation.

On the downside, the Department failed to address the problem of overuse in the High Peaks Wilderness and elsewhere, and resisted the logical upgrading of certain lands to Wilderness status where mechanized uses are prohibited and natural tranquility prevails.

OLYMPIC REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY—5

Created by the State Legislature in 1981 and supported by an annual budget of about \$5,000,000, ORDA gets a high grade for aggressively promoting winter sports in the Adirondack Park and thereby helping to stimulate a year-round economy in a region too long dependent on seasonal summer tourism. But ORDA earns a low grade for seeking amendments to the State Land Master Plan that would circumvent the "forever wild" provision of the State Constitution.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE—5

This Department has been increasingly sensitive to the need to preserve Wilderness and protect open space in its actions as a member of the Adirondack Park Agency. But its willingness to exchange constitutionally-protected Forest Preserve lands to settle Indian land claims accounts for its relatively low rating.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION—4

While the Department has commendably continued to use distinctive signing and guiderails within the Adirondack Park, its program to relocate ugly roadside maintenance sites has apparently stalled, it has continued to neglect the need for safe pull-offs where motorists can stop to enjoy the Park's scenic vistas, and it has, in maintenance work on Route 28 and elsewhere, needlessly destroyed or degraded portions of the Park's wetlands.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION—3

The Public Service Commission has refused to deal with the visual blight caused by telephone and electric lines throughout the Park, and has sanctioned the use of toxic herbicides along utility line corridors. The Commission's past record requiring the undergrounding of transmission lines under certain rivers, and its good work in keeping major new lines outside the Park, kept the Commission's rating from being even lower.

NEW YORK STATE SENATE—1

The Senate gets the booby prize for a consistently anti-environmental posture, most particularly 1) its perennial refusal to provide legislative protection for more than 100 miles of Adirondack rivers that were recommended by the Adirondack Park Agency in 1979 for inclusion in the State's River System, and 2) its failure to approve legislation that would subject State development in the Adirondacks to the same scrutiny as private development.



The Rock River

OMINOUS TREND NOTED

BREAK-UP OF BIG HOLDINGS REVEALS NEED FOR BETTER PARK PROTECTION

Currently one-third of the Adirondack Park, or about 2,000,000 acres, belong to wood products companies or large private estates. These lands, along with the 2.5 million acres of public Forest Preserve, account for the distinctive open-space character of the Adirondack Park.

During the past year, a disturbing new trend was discerned in the Adirondacks. In a major policy change, International Paper Company, the largest corporate landowner in the Park, began to sell off thousands of acres, some of it of critical importance to the future of the Adirondack Park, to private interests. At the same time, the William Rockefeller estate near Paul Smith's, NY, became the first large family holding to be subdivided with lots offered for sale to non-family members.

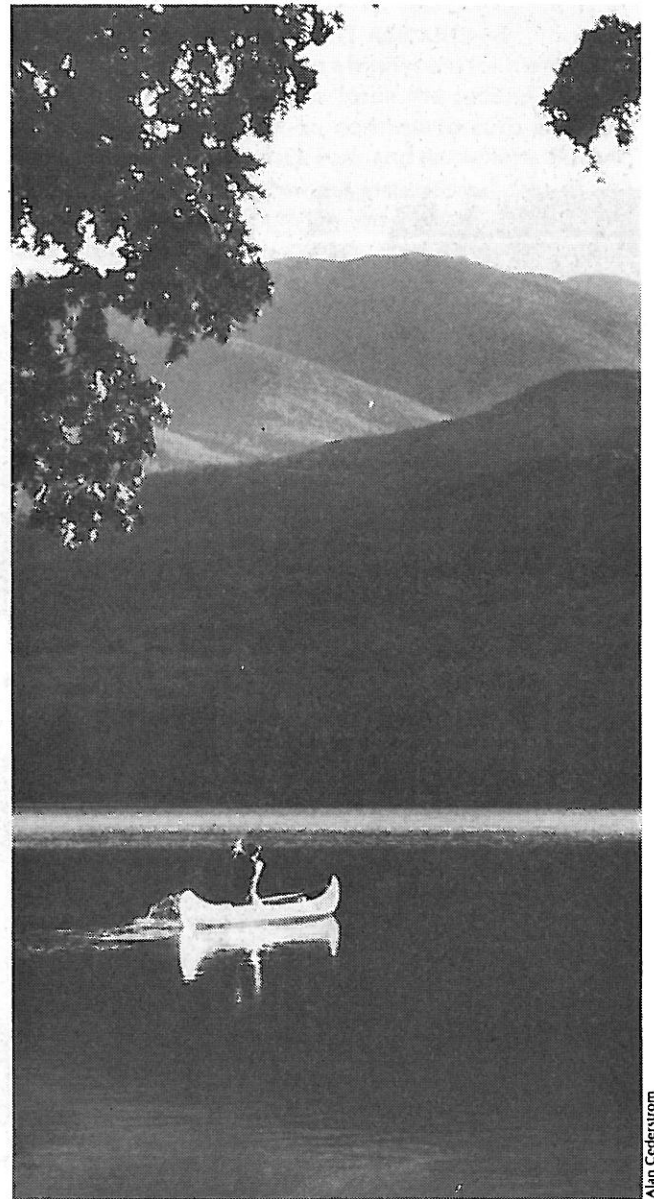
This ominous trend underscores the urgent need for a continuing acquisition campaign in the Adirondack Park over the next few decades.

In recognition that the \$44,000,000 in Adirondack acquisition funds authorized by the State's voters in 1972 is now either spent or committed, Governor Cuomo called for another bond issue that will replenish depleted Adirondack acquisition funds. The bond issue must be enacted by the Legislature and approved by the voters in November. It will provide an estimated \$75-100 million for direct purchases of land, as well as the purchase of conservation easements, in the Adirondack Park. Enactment and approval of this bond issue is the Adirondack Council's top priority in 1986.

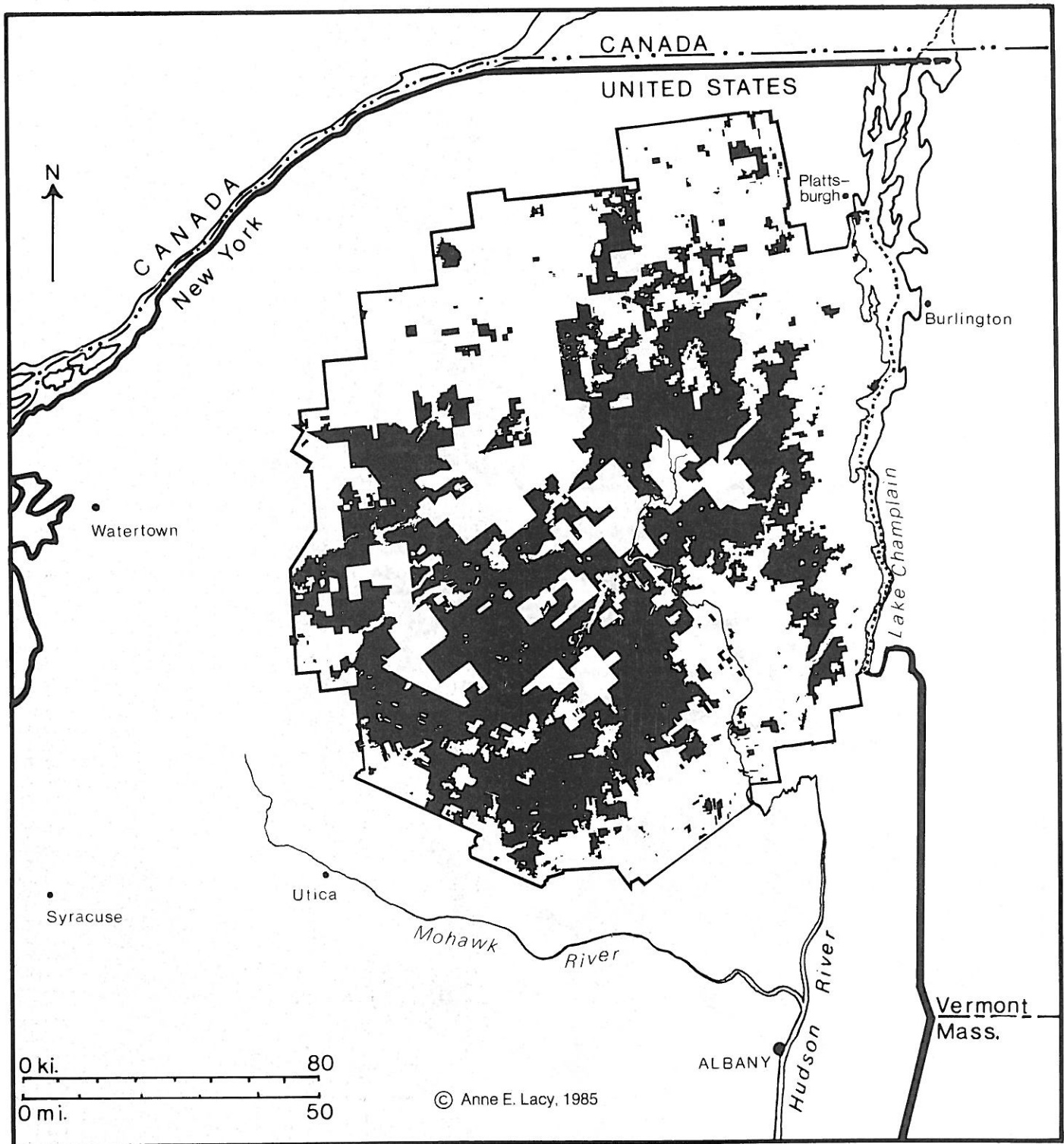
However, if lasting protection is to be achieved for the Park, a total of \$300 million must eventually be spent on Adirondack acquisitions, according to a study by the Council. Of this total, \$100 million will be needed to acquire approximately 500,000 additional acres of private lands to be added to the Adirondack Forest Preserve. These fee-title purchases will round out publicly-owned Wilderness areas, provide a new Wilderness area in the low-elevation boreal life zone (the only life zone not now adequately represented in the Adirondack Wilderness System), create another Adirondack Canoe Area, protect critical corridors of Adirondack rivers now in private ownership, and consolidate fragmented tracts of Forest Preserve.

The additional \$200 million will be needed to acquire conservation easements on about 2,000,000 privately-owned acres in the Adirondack Park, thus protecting the Park's scenic, open-space character in perpetuity. At the

same time, conservation easements will insure the perpetuation of present open-space uses such as forestry, farming, hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreational activities that require a natural setting.



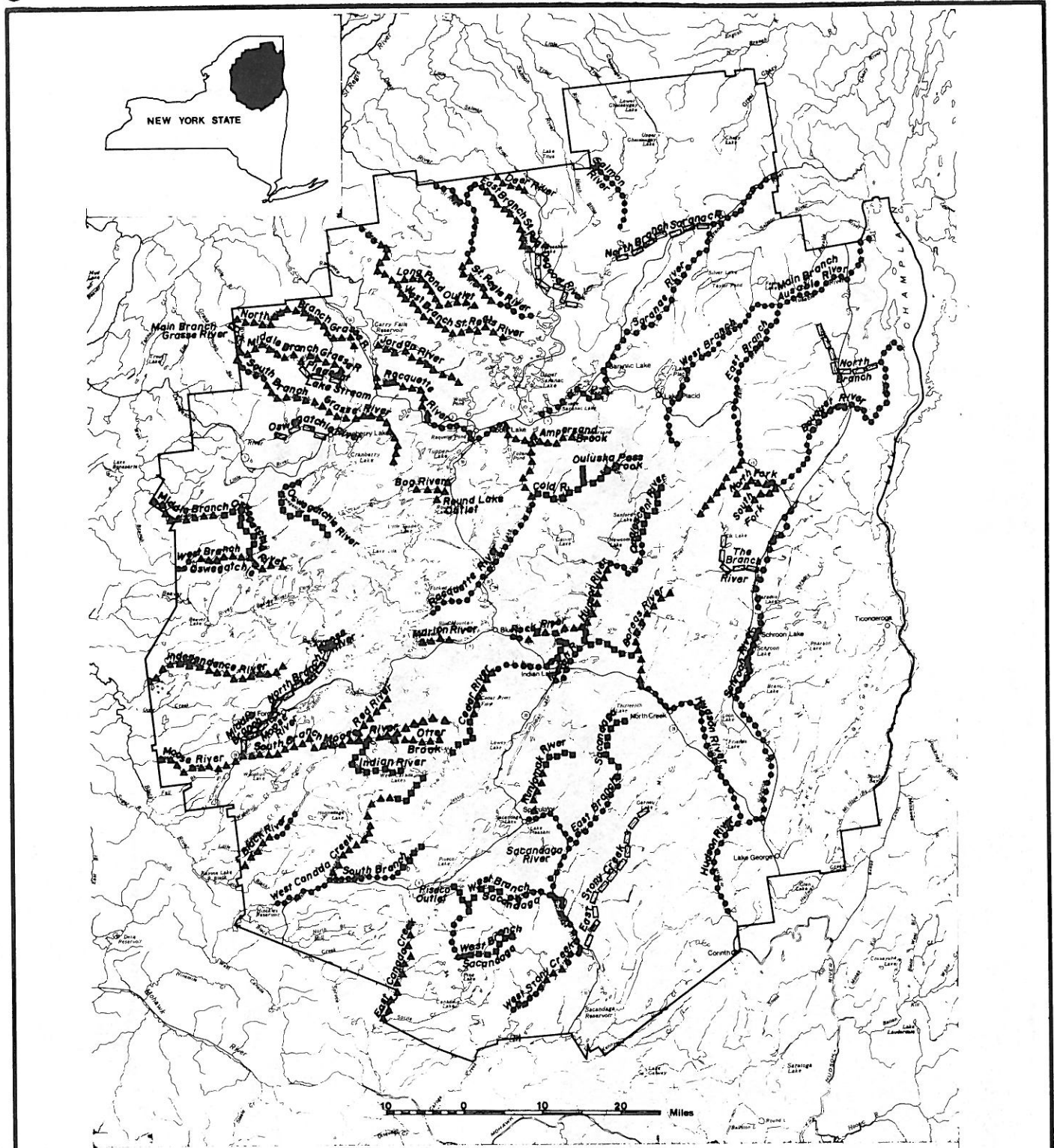
Funds from a 1986 bond issue will enable the State to buy land or easements to secure new public canoe routes.



Patchwork Ownership Pattern

The patchwork mix of public (black) and private (white) lands has generally benefited the Adirondack Park. But that may soon change as large private holdings begin to break

up. What happens to private lands in the way of inappropriate development can irreparably degrade the natural character of the Park.



ADIRONDACK PARK PORTION
of the
N.Y.S. Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System



DESIGNATED RIVERS



WILD



SCENIC



RECREATIONAL

STUDY RIVERS



**ADIRONDACK "STUDY RIVERS" ABOVE SHOULD
BE INCLUDED IN STATE'S RIVER SYSTEM**

ADIRONDACK RIVERS

129 MILES OF NATURAL WATERWAYS NEED PROTECTION OF STATE SYSTEM

New York State's Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System keeps many of our finest rivers and streams in their natural, free-flowing condition. Once in the System, a river cannot be dammed nor can the land adjacent to the river be marred by incompatible development. Of the 1257 river miles now in the System, 1206 miles are Adirondack rivers. Yet some notable stretches of Adirondack rivers are still not included.

Expanding the Adirondack portion of the System should be a high environmental priority in 1986 for the people of the State and their elected representatives.

To its credit, the **State Assembly** has consistently approved legislation adding these "study rivers" to the System. To his credit, **Governor Cuomo** has identified inclusion of these rivers as one of his current legislative goals. To its discredit, the **State Senate**, bowing to the influence of Adirondack-area senators who routinely oppose land-use controls in the Adirondack Park, has refused to legislate the necessary protection for these magnificent waterways.

In 1979, the **Adirondack Park Agency** urged that an additional 104 miles of nine Adirondack rivers be included in the System. The Adirondack Council has reviewed the Agency's studies and finds that the following 129 miles of ten rivers are sufficiently undeveloped to qualify for the System:

RIVER	LOCATION	PROPOSED DESIGNATION
Osgood	5 mi. in Franklin Co.	WILD
	2 mi. in Franklin Co.	SCENIC
	6 mi. in Franklin Co.	RECREATIONAL
The Branch	8 mi. in Essex Co.	SCENIC
	3 mi. in Essex Co.	RECREATIONAL
East Stony Creek	7 mi. in Hamilton Co.	SCENIC
	11 mi. in Hamilton Co.	RECREATIONAL
Grass	5 mi. in St. Lawrence Co.	SCENIC
North Branch Moose	19 mi. in Herkimer Co.	SCENIC
Pleasant Lake Stream	5 mi. in St. Lawrence Co.	SCENIC
North Branch Boquet	17 mi. in Essex Co.	RECREATIONAL
Middle Branch Moose	13 mi. in Herkimer Co.	RECREATIONAL
Oswegatchie	11 mi. in St. Lawrence Co.	RECREATIONAL
North Branch Saranac	17 mi. in Franklin and Clinton Counties	RECREATIONAL



Gary Randorf

The Middle Branch of the Moose River should be classified as a Recreational River—and thus be preserved in its unspoiled, free-flowing condition for future generations.

SCENIC ADIRONDACK ROADWAYS

A RARE AND ENDANGERED RESOURCE REQUIRES SPECIAL ATTENTION NOW

The **Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Conservation, and Adirondack Park Agency** have ignored their responsibilities to protect the scenic beauty along many Adirondack roadsides.

The Adirondack Park today contains some of the most scenic roads in the United States. In 1972, the State Land Master Plan, prepared by the newly-created Adirondack Park Agency and approved by the Governor, identified 40 outstanding "scenic vistas" along Adirondack highways and backroads that require permanent protection.

These remarkable vistas could easily, in their present, precarious, unprotected state, be diminished or spoiled. Almost 90 percent of the Park's roadsides are still in private ownership. One misplaced house or other structure in the foreground or middleground of a scenic vista can permanently impair the public's view of mountains, forests, lakes, wetlands or meadows. Yet *nothing has been done to date by the responsible State entities to ensure that these outlooks will survive into the next century.*

In cases where the designated scenic vistas overlook private lands, the **Department of Environmental Conservation** should purchase conservation easements (development rights) to protect the view in perpetuity.

The **Department of Transportation** should, as a matter of course, add vehicle pull-offs at designated scenic vistas throughout the Park whenever the adjacent high-

way is reconstructed, thus enabling motorists to safely and unhurriedly enjoy the Park's scenic splendors.

The **Adirondack Park Agency** should provide interpretive signs at each of these pull-offs, thus enabling visitors to better understand and enjoy what they are seeing.

Of the thousands of miles of natural, undeveloped travel corridors in the Adirondack Park, one of the finest is the east-west Blue Ridge Road in Essex County connecting North Hudson with Newcomb. Here the passing motorist can enjoy an uninterrupted 10-mile view of the Hoffman Notch Wilderness. The Blue Ridge Road in the Adirondacks offers a drive unsurpassed anywhere in the East, including the celebrated Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia and North Carolina. Yet much of this route is wide-open to random roadside development that could permanently degrade the natural scene.

The **Adirondack Park Agency** should designate as "critical environmental areas" the most scenic stretches of county roads — which the Agency has the authority and responsibility to do — so that special care will be taken in the siting of future development along or near these roadsides.

Governor Cuomo, in accordance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, should without delay require his executive agencies to coordinate efforts to protect these rare scenic resources while there is still time to do so.

BEFORE



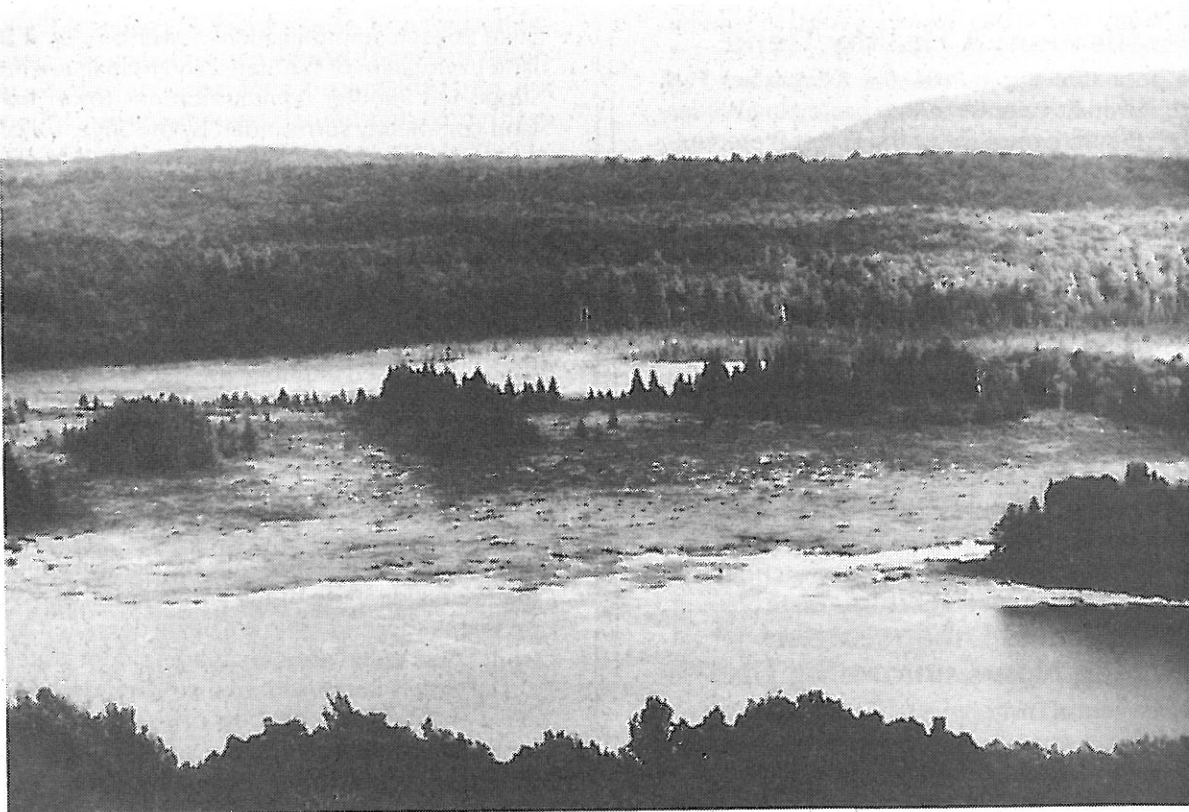
Alan Cederstrom

AFTER



Alan Cederstrom

Construction of even one single residence can impair a beautiful roadside vista unless the building is carefully located.



Gary Randorf

The Bog River Flow and surrounding wild lands is one of the best State acquisitions in recent years.

ADIRONDACK FOREST PRESERVE

GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS FOR THE EAST'S FINEST PUBLIC PRESERVE

The Adirondack Forest Preserve is the State-owned component of the Adirondack Park. These public lands, safeguarded for the use and enjoyment of everyone, constitute the most significant natural area in public ownership in the Northeast. Moreover, the Adirondack Forest Preserve contains 1,000,000 acres that carry the additional designation of Wilderness; here natural tranquility and natural processes reign supreme, human influence is minimal, and mechanized uses of any kind, including jeeps, snowmobiles, trailbikes, motorboats, and float planes, are prohibited.

Five important developments of the past year, three of them favorable and two of them troublesome, are highlighted here.

Acquisitions: A Banner Year

Last year, the Adirondack Council urged Environmental Conservation Commissioner Henry G. Williams to "use the Forest Preserve centennial year as an opportunity to focus on acquisition needs and to infuse the mori-

bund acquisition program with the initiative and direction it so sorely needs."

The Commissioner has done just that. In the past year, the **Department of Environmental Conservation** has purchased 31 parcels of new Forest Preserve lands totaling 17,047 acres at a cost of \$2,471,602. Twenty-six of these parcels serve such critical public objectives as rounding out Wilderness and Primitive areas and protecting the corridors of Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers. In addition, the **Department** completed negotiations for several other tracts, including 16,240 acres in "Watson's East Triangle" that will permit the consolidation of the Five Ponds and Pepperbox Wilderness Areas.

The most spectacular acquisition was the State's purchase of 9,248 acres on the eastern boundary of the Five Ponds Wilderness. This parcel includes most of the Bog River Flow and opens unexcelled wilderness canoeing to the public in large portions of the western Adirondacks. This acquisition was a complex one, involving negotiations with four separate owners. The **Department** deserves special credit for its successful conclusion.

Classification: A Healthy Trend

After a poor showing in 1984, the **Adirondack Park Agency** renewed its commitment to protecting Wilderness as the premiere resource of the Forest Preserve.

The Jay Mountain Primitive Area was upgraded by the **Agency** to Wilderness, making this 7,100-acre tract in the northeastern Adirondacks the sixteenth Wilderness area in the Adirondack Forest Preserve. This unit contains the essentially-trailless Jay Range, overlooking Lake Champlain and Vermont's Green Mountains to the east and the higher Adirondacks to the southwest.

In classifying new acquisitions, the **Agency** also recognized the need to protect and enhance the Wilderness component of the Forest Preserve. In five of the six decisions where the question arose as to whether a newly acquired parcel should be classified Wilderness or Wild Forest, the **Agency** opted for Wilderness.

Wilderness Enhancement: Removing Non-Conforming Uses

The **Department of Environmental Conservation** moved to make Wilderness worthy of the name by removing obsolete fire towers, telephone lines and caretaker facilities. In doing so, the **Department** is carrying out its mandate to reduce unnecessary human intrusions in those areas designated as Wilderness. It is anticipated that by March, 1987, all non-conforming uses and structures will have been phased out of the Adirondack Wilderness System, culminating a 15-year effort by the **Department**.

Management: Mixed Signals

After years of foot-dragging, the **Department of Environmental Conservation** has finally begun to execute its 1972 mandate to produce management plans for the various Wilderness, Wild Forest and Primitive units in the Forest Preserve. The **Department** has produced outstanding plans for the Pepperbox and Ha-da-rondah Wilderness Areas, recognizing the need to protect their natural integrity as well as their psychological value to human visitors in terms of peace and quiet and a sense of remoteness. The **Department** also prepared an excellent partial draft for the Hammond Pond Wild Forest Area, seeking a reasonable balance of use and preservation. At the same time, the **Department** made a poor showing with its partially completed consolidated draft plan for the Bald Ledge Primitive Area, Crane Pond Primitive Corridor, Gooseneck Primitive Area, and Pharoah Lake Wilderness, and with its draft plan for the Black Mountain Wild Forest Area (which was unwisely severed from the Lake George Wild Forest Area).

The **Department of Environmental Conservation** has taken numerous positions on Forest Preserve matters, particularly at Adirondack Park Agency meetings, that indicate a disturbing trend in Forest Preserve and Wilderness management philosophy. For example, the **Department** 1) supported construction of a 100-foot

State Police communications tower on Forest Preserve land in violation of the State Land Management Plan; 2) supported another communications tower on private land completely surrounded by the Silver Lake Wilderness, implying that the impact on the Wilderness was not of major significance and that the **Department** had no plans to acquire this critical Wilderness inholding; and 3) decided to allow the 8.5-mile Buck Pond Road, penetrating to the heart of the Five Ponds Wilderness, to remain open to public motorized use despite a strongly-implied policy in the State Land Master Plan that such roads should be closed to public use because of their damaging impact on surrounding Wilderness.

The Problem of Overuse

The **Department of Environmental Conservation** has failed to accept the challenge of balancing and dispersing recreational use of the Forest Preserve. As a result, several Wilderness areas are being degraded by overuse while most Wild Forest areas are seldom visited.

The variety and extent of the Adirondack Forest Preserve enables large numbers of visitors to pursue many kinds of recreation with minimal conflict, from snowmobiling, dogsledding and cross country skiing to canoeing, water-skiing and motorboating. The classifi-



An overused, eroded trail to Mt. Marcy.

cation of Adirondack Forest Preserve into several distinct categories was a first step toward dispersing visitors seeking wildness and separating incompatible uses. But the benefits of an enlightened classification system have not been translated into on-the-ground management.

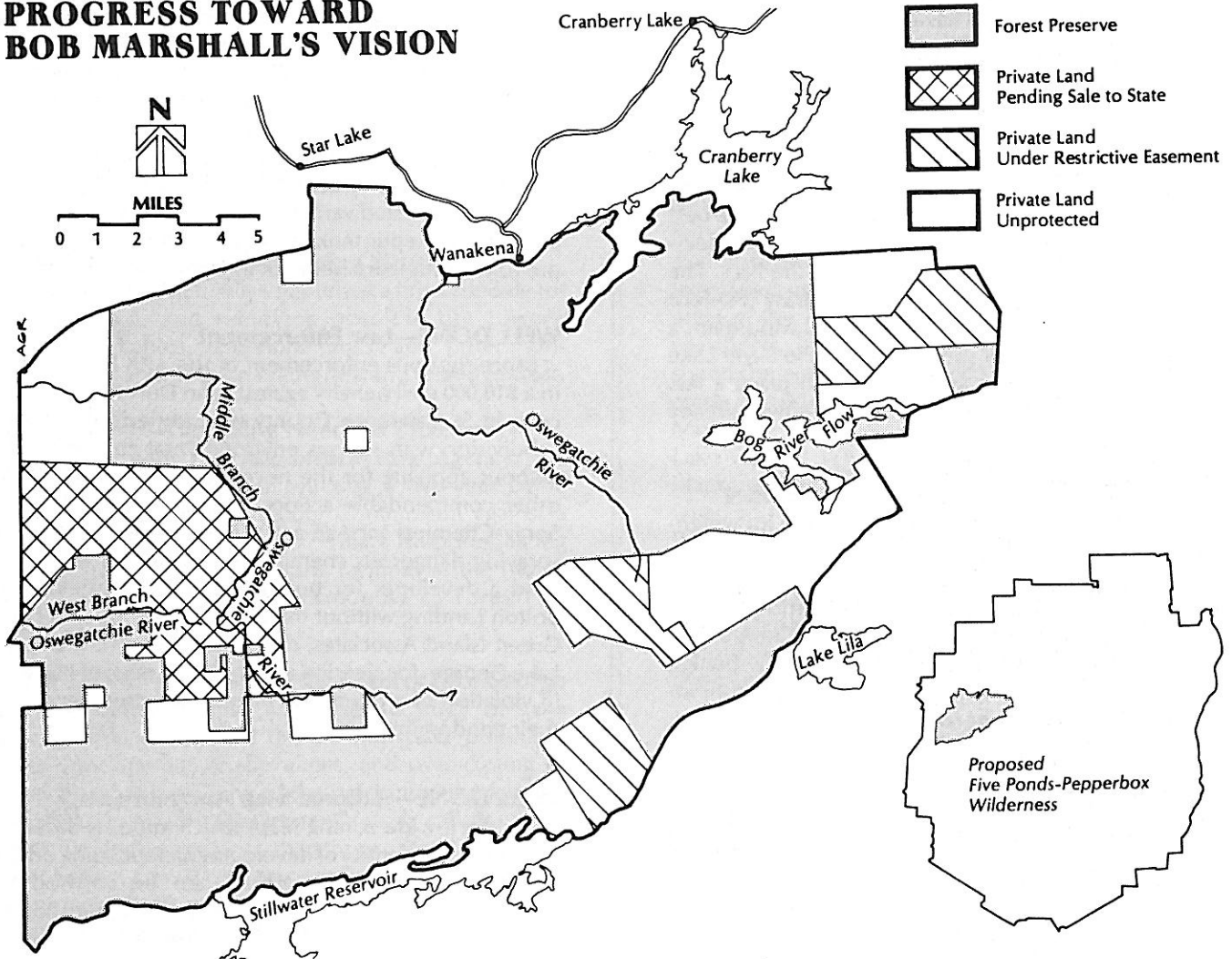
Certain areas of the Forest Preserve have been suffering the effects of increasing overuse: eroded trails, crowded mountaintops, congested canoe carries, and heavy competition for backcountry campsites. The most damaging overuse occurs in the eastern High Peaks Wilderness, where Mt. Marcy and other principal mountains act as a magnet for hikers and campers. In 1984, more than 29,000 individuals entered the High Peaks Wilderness on the trail to Mt. Marcy from the Adirondack Loj at Heart Lake.

But overuse occurs elsewhere. At Pharoah Lake, 300 visitors have been recorded on the lakeshore in one night and groups of 250 or more Boy Scouts have been observed in the area. In the St. Regis Canoe Area, a nearby summer camp treats a secluded State-owned pond as an extension of the camp. On Ampersand Mountain in the High Peaks Wilderness, hundreds of

teenagers from a nearby camp have traditionally climaxed their one-week sessions throughout the summer by climbing the severely eroded trail *en masse* to the summit. On Cascade Mountain in the High Peaks Wilderness, legions of luge racers, training in and around Lake Placid, have been observed running up and down the mountain as part of their physical fitness program. On Pitchoff Mountain in the Sentinel Range Wilderness, busloads of hikers on summer and fall weekends effectively take over the trail.

The Adirondack Council encourages recreational use of the Forest Preserve, but if Wilderness is to be maintained, some use must be dispersed to Wild Forest areas or the hundreds of thousands of acres of lesser-used Wilderness. It is time for the **Department of Environmental Conservation** to confront this serious problem and manage all of the Forest Preserve resources, including Wilderness, according to carrying capacities and appropriate levels of use. To accomplish this, the **Governor and State Legislature** must provide sufficient funding for the **Department** to properly manage and protect these resources.

PROGRESS TOWARD BOB MARSHALL'S VISION



In 1934, Bob Marshall envisioned a "Great Wilderness" of 350,000 acres south of Cranberry Lake. It is still possible to create a 200,000 acre Five Ponds-Pepperbox Wilderness here if the public supports the 1986 Environmental Bond Issue.

PUBLIC STEWARDSHIP

JOBS WELL DONE, HALF DONE, POORLY DONE OR NOT DONE

ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY

WELL DONE—Informing the Public

For too many years, almost nothing has been done by public agencies to explain the natural history, preservation efforts and recreational opportunities in the Adirondack Park. Now the **Adirondack Park Agency** has moved to fill that information vacuum with a series of excellent publications including "Citizens Guides" to the Adirondack Forest Preserve, Adirondack Wetlands, Adirondack Forestry, and Adirondack Community Planning. Also available are pamphlets entitled "The Adirondack Park" and "Developing a Business in the Adirondack Park." The Agency has also produced up-to-date maps showing public and private land classifications, and has introduced an excellent acid rain awareness program in many schools.

WELL DONE—Minimizing Unnatural Intrusions

In cooperation with the **Division of State Police**, the **Agency** achieved a compromise that worked in the best interests of all, including the public interest in protecting the natural, undisturbed character of the Park. The **State Police** agreed not to build a separate 140-foot tower as originally proposed on Cathead Mountain, a privately-owned summit surrounded by the Silver Lake Wilderness. Instead, the **State Police** will place a less obtrusive 40-foot structure on the State firetower already on the mountain.

WELL DONE—Screening Chemical Pesticides

The **Agency** developed an efficient model for weighing the benefits and risks of particular chemical pesticides based on a computerized review of existing information. In reviewing a permit application by the developer of Sagamore Island in Lake George, the **Agency** approved the use of certain relatively benign chemicals on the Sagamore golf course while prohibiting the use of more dangerous ones such as Malathion, Trichlorfon and Carbaryl.

WELL DONE—Restraining ORDA

The **Agency** required the **Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA)** to submit its proposals for new development at the Olympic ski jump site to the same review process as similar new private development in the Park. **ORDA** had claimed that, as a quasi-public agency, it should be exempt from APA permit requirements, even though the proposed projects—a spectator building, chairlift and downhill ski trail—were planned for non-State-owned land.

WELL DONE—A Judicious Approach to Variances

Variances granted by the typical zoning authority often become the rule rather than the exception, thereby negating the intended benefits of the zoning plan. In the past year, the **Agency** has proved itself capable of both fairness and restraint in considering variances to the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan. In one case, for example, the **Agency** issued a variance allowing a boathouse on Lower Saranac Lake to be converted to a residence, even though the Land Use and Development Plan prohibited such a development. In granting the exception, the **Agency** reasoned that the permitted use—the construction of an entirely new building on otherwise undisturbed lakeshore property—would have caused more environmental disturbance than the requested alternative.

But the **Agency** has also held firm in denying variances that would result in aesthetic and ecological damage, such as a requested variance that would have allowed a building and septic tank on Tommy's Rock, a tiny islet of predominantly-bare bedrock in Upper Saranac Lake.

WELL DONE—Law Enforcement

More rigorous enforcement of the APA law resulted in a \$10,000 civil penalty against John DeFelice, a developer in St. Lawrence County who undertook a 14-lot subdivision with serious environmental consequences without applying for the necessary Agency permit. In other commendable actions, the **Agency** cited Duflo Spray-Chemical Inc., an aerial pesticide applicator, for spraying dangerous chemicals on protected wetlands; sued a developer for building a private airfield near Bolton Landing without the required permit; and cited Green Island Associates, owner of Sagamore Island on Lake George, for clearing a shoreline of most of its trees, in violation of a permit, to provide a better view from their condominiums.

WELL DONE—Rational Map Amendments

The Park-wide zoning map, which imposes different limitations on density of development depending on the private-land classifications, can be refined by amendments that move land from one classification to another. In the past, the **Agency** abused the amendment process by granting certain map changes (such as the one permitting unlimited development of Sagamore Island in Lake George) that have conflicted with the public interest in protecting the Park against incompati-

ble development.

In the past year, however, the **Agency** has proved itself capable of granting map amendments that are both fair to landowners and protective of the Park's natural character. For example, the **Agency** negotiated a map amendment with the Town of Altamont, based on detailed soil mapping, that allowed increased development near the Big Tupper Ski Area while also reducing allowable development near Simon Pond because of steep slopes, shallow soils, and other resource constraints. The net result was that 175 additional residential

buildings could be concentrated in the area most suitable for development.

NOT DONE—Neglecting Scenic Roads

The **Agency** has failed to designate a single mile of scenic county roads as a "critical environmental area." By fulfilling this responsibility, the **Agency** could exercise permit granting authority for development projects that might otherwise degrade the natural, scenic qualities of some of the loveliest backroads in the eastern United States.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

WELL DONE—Wildlife Conference

In conjunction with the **State College of Environmental Sciences and Forestry**, the **Department** sponsored a major conference exploring the feasibility of restoring such extirpated Adirondack wildlife as the timber wolf, mountain lion, and Canadian lynx. This conference reviewed objective data that should blunt the ill-informed, emotional objections that have been raised in opposition to such restorations.

WELL DONE—Non-Conforming Structures

The **Department** finally established a firm schedule for closing roads and removing obsolete fire towers, observers' cabins, telephone lines, and other non-conforming anomalies in Wilderness and Primitive areas.

WELL DONE—Opposing Needless Exploitation

Together with the **Adirondack Park Agency**, the **Department** succeeded in winning a two-year battle before the Federal Regulatory Commission against a proposal by the Hudson River — Black River Regulating District to install hydro-electric facilities at the Indian Lake Dam, which is on and surrounded by Forest Preserve lands.

WELL DONE—Confronting the Plight of Lake George

The **Department** has completed a study of Lake George that documents the air and water pollution, over-development of shorelines, and over-cutting of trees on what is still one of the most beautiful lakes in North America. The **Department's** study calls for more rigorous land-use controls than those of the Adirondack Park Agency Law. (These recommendations should now be implemented, with the new controls being meshed with the Adirondack Park Agency Act.)

WELL DONE—Unit Management Plans

The **Department** has drafted exemplary unit management plans for the Pepperbox and Ha-da-ron-dah Wil-

derness Areas, and the Independence River Wild Forest Area, in the western Adirondacks. The plans combine expert field studies of the physical and biological resources with practical guidelines for protecting the ecological integrity of these key public lands.

POORLY DONE—Unit Management Plans

The partial consolidated draft plan for four Forest Preserve units—Blue Ledge Primitive Area, Crane Pond Primitive Corridor, Gooseneck Primitive Area, and Pharoah Lake Wilderness—fails to deal with the basic problem of overuse and to consider how the wilderness character of the Pharoah Lake Area can be preserved and enhanced. In addition, the **Department**, seeking to speed the approval process to allow yet another man-made tower on a mountaintop, segmented the Black Mountain Wild Forest Area from the remainder of the Lake George Wild Forest Area for unit management planning. The result was a hastily-conceived plan that failed to integrate the many uses and facilities on the Forest Preserve in the Lake George basin.

POORLY DONE—Failing to Distribute Use

The **Department** has failed to take measures to distribute the recreational use of the Forest Preserve from overused to lesser used areas.

POORLY DONE—Resisting Wilderness Classification

The **Department** has consistently resisted Wilderness classification, arguing against Wilderness classification for lands near Chatiemac Lake and in the Black Mountain Brook drainage adjacent to the Siamese Ponds Wilderness, and resisting Wilderness classification for the Ausable River lands adjacent to the Sentinel Range Wilderness. The regional staff also sought to allow the Old Farm Clearing and South Meadows Roads, which penetrate deeply into the Siamese Ponds and High Peaks Wildernesses, to remain open for motorized use despite the Wilderness classification.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

POORLY DONE—Abusing Adirondack Wetlands

The **Department's** maintenance crews often dump or bulldoze sand and waste material into Park wetlands. The most flagrant example in the past year was along Route 28 between Indian Lake and North Creek.

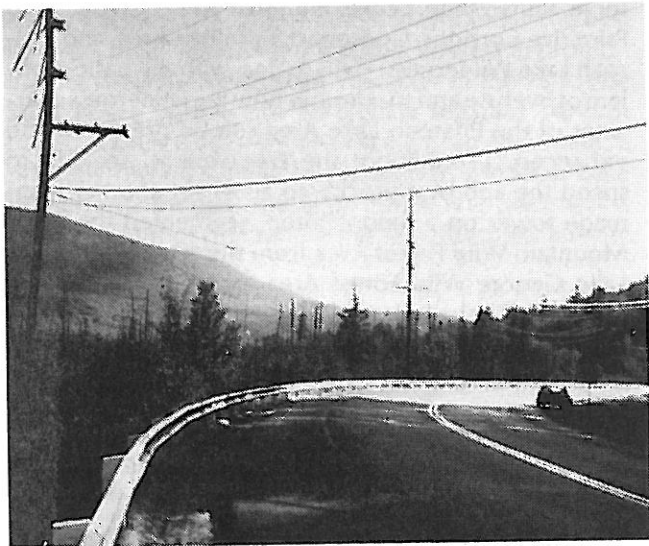
NOT DONE—Unsightly Maintenance Areas

The **Department's** program to rehabilitate or relocate its many unsightly maintenance sites, with their huge piles of sand and scattered shacks, stalled in 1985 despite approval by the Adirondack Park Agency for improvement of the Cranberry Lake, Wells and Hoffmeister sites.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

NOT DONE—Ignoring Visual Blight

Two years ago the **Public Service Commission** determined that it had the authority to reduce the visual impact of overhead electric and telephone distribution lines by undergrounding or relocating such lines. Since then, the **Commission** has simply looked the other way, ignoring the unsightly mess of wires overhead.



Overhead utility lines mar the natural scene.

George Davis

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

POORLY DONE—A Forest Preserve Giveaway?

The **Department** announced that constitutionally protected Forest Preserve lands would be available for exchange to settle Oneida Indian land claims even though the State Constitution specifically prohibits the sale or exchange of Forest Preserve without a constitutional amendment.

STATE SENATE

NOT DONE—Ignoring Adirondack Rivers

The State Senate continued its seven-year obstruction of legislation to amend the State's Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System to include more than 100 miles of Adirondack rivers in the System—a long overdue action that would save these priceless waterways from possible future damming and other incompatible development.

STATE ASSEMBLY

WELL DONE—Working to Protect the Park

Under the leadership of Maurice Hinchey, Chairman of the Environmental Conservation Committee, the State Assembly once more in 1985 promoted legislation that would strengthen protective measures already on the books for the Adirondack Park.

GOVERNOR CUOMO

WELL DONE—Securing the Park's Future

In announcing plans for a major visitor interpretive program, a bond act providing Forest Preserve acquisition funds, and expansion of the Adirondack component of the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System, the **Governor** has affirmed the Park's importance as a natural sanctuary for millions of New York State residents and visitors.

HALF DONE—Confronting a Population Explosion

The **Governor** signed into law a measure that threatens to erode the authority of the Adirondack Park Agency. Near Watertown, on the northwestern fringe of the Adirondack Park, Fort Drum is about to expand tenfold with a local population increase of 30,000 expected by 1990. In response to this expansion, the **Governor** and **Legislature** created a Development Authority of the North Country (a wise step) but failed to incorporate the **Adirondack Park Agency's** planning and regulatory powers for those portions of Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties now under Agency jurisdiction.

HALF DONE—A Conservation Easement Program

Since the 1984 amendments to New York State's conservation easement law inadvertently foreclosed the use of existing funds to purchase Adirondack easements, the ambitious conservation easement program promised by **Governor Cuomo** has yet to materialize. As a result, easements on two critical open space parcels, totalling 24,000 acres, have been held up and a great opportunity possibly lost. The **Governor** has committed himself to solving the problem in 1986; it is hoped that the two-year delay will not have foreclosed any options.

POORLY DONE—Selling Off Forest Preserve

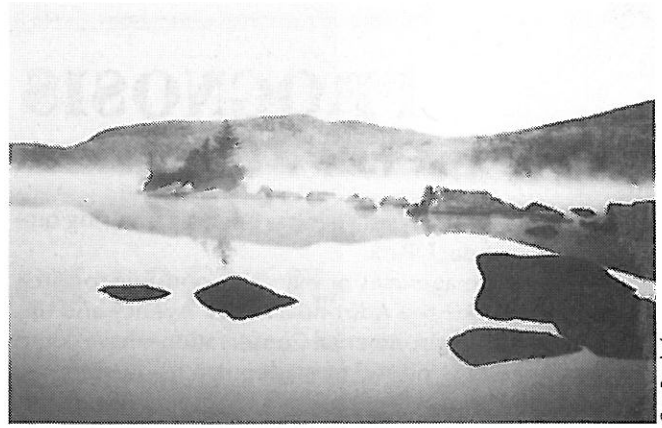
For understandable reasons, the **Governor** wished to rid the State of the vast expanse of maintaining Camp Topridge. But instead of using the constitutional amendment process to do so, he chose to ignore the State Constitution and ordered the **Office of General Services** to sell the Camp and surrounding Forest Preserve.

ATTORNEY GENERAL ABRAMS**WELL DONE—Fighting Acid Rain**

Attorney General Abrams has been a national leader in pressing the laggard Environmental Protection Agency to adopt regulations that will limit the air pollution from coal fired power plants and smelters, primarily in the Midwest, that causes much of the acid rain in the Northeast.

POORLY DONE—Shortchanging the Preserve

The Attorney General aided and abetted the sale of historic Camp Topridge and surrounding Forest Preserve. He also has failed to adequately staff his Real Property Division, a step that would hasten the purchase of additional Adirondack Forest Preserve.



West Lake

Cary Randorf

ADIRONDACK TOWN GOVERNMENTS**WELL DONE—Ecologically-Sound Pest Control**

The Adirondack Towns of **Keene, Franklin, Indian Lake, Newcomb** and **Horicon** deserve credit for switching from the indiscriminate spraying of dangerous chemicals to combat blackflies and mosquitoes to the use of a selectively applied, biological control. Known as Bti, this bacterial larvacide is proving to be a safer and more effective device than Dibrom-14 and Methoxychlor, the chemical poisons previously broadcast from airplanes to accomplish the same purpose.



Province of Ontario

Someday the eastern timber wolf and other extirpated species may regain their rightful niche in the Adirondack Park.

PROGNOSIS FOR THE PARK

In many ways, this past year has been a promising one for the Adirondack Park.

The two state agencies primarily responsible for protecting the Park—the Adirondack Park Agency and the Department of Environmental Conservation—have come to life after a long period of inadequate leadership.

The Governor has emerged as a champion of Adirondack Park protection. The State Assembly supports measures that strengthen existing protection. Local Adirondack governments are acting to protect the Park against pesticide poisons. And the State's newspapers have called for a bond issue in November to include funds for acquisition of land and conservation easements that will provide permanent protection for the Adirondack Park.

Only the State Senate has failed to represent the public interest in preserving the Adirondacks. But hope is strong that this year these elected representatives will see fit—as they once did—to act as responsible stewards of this great public resource.

What is most extraordinary about the Adirondack Park is that it is wilder and more extensive today than at the time of its creation in 1892. The Adirondack Park represents wildness and natural beauty *resurrected*, born again from the wholesale destruction by logging and forest fires of earlier times. The Park has been greatly expanded since 1892, and the process of rounding out the fragmented public holdings—the Adirondack Forest Preserve—continues today.

As human population and human activities increase, wildness and natural beauty are resources that tend to be diminished and obliterated. Rarely are natural areas revived and expanded. It is a tribute to the foresight of our ancestors that we have, in the Adirondack Park, lands as diverse and beautiful as any in the nation. By allocating new acquisition funds, and by seizing on other opportunities outlined in this report, we can move now to permanently secure this magnificent heritage for future generations. It will reflect well on our generation if we do so.



A view of Gothics and Pyramid Mountains from the Upper Ausable Lake—an example of how conservation easements can permanently protect the finest Adirondack landscapes.

THE ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

Founded in 1975, the Adirondack Council is dedicated to protecting the Adirondack Park through public education, monitoring and advising government agencies and the State Legislature, and legal action when necessary.

The Council is a coalition of the National Audubon Society, Wilderness Society, Natural Resources Defense

Council, National Parks and Conservation Association, and Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks. While the Council receives moral support from these member organizations, its financial support comes mainly from its 3,400 individual members and from private foundations.

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The Adirondack Council

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April 1986

A coalition of the National Audubon Society; The Wilderness Society; The Natural Resources Defense Council; The Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks; National Parks and Conservation Association; and other concerned organizations and individuals.

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