

State of the Park 2001



Good news for 2001: The Round Lake Tract, which lies just north of the Adirondack Council's proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness, is part of a 26,500-acre land deal that includes 16,600 acres of forests, lakes and streams in "the Bob."





State of the Park 2001

Dear Members and Friends:

This is the most positive *State of the Park* report to date. With few exceptions, you will see a beneficial change in the Adirondack Park's entire political landscape.

Local government officials who once railed against land-use regulations are now spending local tax dollars to promote life in "the Park." Many are seeking new land-use controls, and some are opening Adirondack Park visitor centers in their towns.

The APA is growing more effective and efficient. The Department of Environmental Conservation worked out a spectacular land deal with The Nature Conservancy and International Paper Co., bringing the proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness a step closer to reality. The nation's courts produced several decisions that will help protect the Park from acid rain and from attacks by so-called property rights organizations. Our Acid Rain Team in Congress is beating the drum for reform of the Clean Air Act. Our Attorney General is battling Midwest smokestacks on several fronts. And, for the seventh year in a row, Gov. George Pataki earned much more praise than criticism.

For the first time, we have recognized the work of local governments outside the Adirondack Park for contributions to the Park's longterm health. Both a Long Island school district and a Montgomery County town south of the Park won a "thumbs up" from the Council's board of directors.

State of the Park 2001 is not entirely a love letter, however. For example, DEC personnel committed some extremely irresponsible acts that harmed the Forest Preserve. Some Legislative initiatives drifted in the wrong direction. But overall, there is much to celebrate.

As you will see, the Adirondack Council plays a pivotal role in all of the most important issues facing the Park at the dawn of the 21st Century. The Council will continue to lead the effort to protect the Park's natural character and support sustainable economic development.

What might not be clear from the enthusiasm of this report is that the Council needs your support more than ever. As always, the Council accepts no government grants or taxpayer money of any kind. That gives us the independence we need to be your eyes, ears and voice in the Adirondacks. The Adirondacks have been called "a refuge for the soul." We may all need the simple joy of being in the Adirondack Park more than ever before.

With your help, I see a bright future ahead for the Adirondack Park and for the Adirondack Council. With your help, next year's *State of the Park* will be even better.

Sincerely,

Bernard C. Melewski
Counsel and Acting Executive Director

Special Announcement

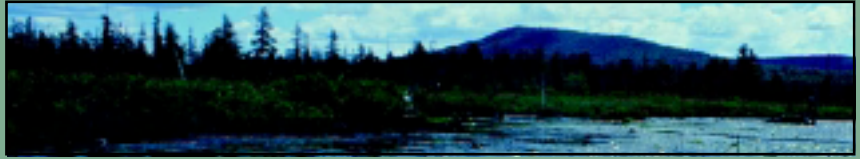
Check out our website for the latest information on the Draft Unit Management Plans for the Forest Preserve

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is accepting comments on certain Draft Unit Management Plans (UMPs). The Council has dedicated an area on our website to keep our members up-to-date on the planning process that is so important to the future of the Adirondack Park. *This is a special project that will last a year or more.*

Members can visit our website, see which draft UMPs DEC is working on, learn what the Council's concerns are, and send their comments to DEC about particular areas of the Park.

**Please visit our website at: www.adirondackcouncil.org
and click on "DEC's Draft Unit Management Planning Process."**

The Governor



Helping Bob Home

The Governor helped to facilitate a spectacular forest land conservation deal in January, bringing the Council's proposal for a 408,000-acre Bob Marshall Great Wilderness a step closer to reality. The Governor assured The Adirondack Nature Conservancy that the state would help finance the protection of 26,500 acres of lake and river-bejeweled central Adirondack lands owned by International Paper Company.

Newly Opened Spaces



In July, the Governor announced that the state had completed the purchase of the 776-acre Bartlett Carry tract for the Forest Preserve, plus a conservation easement on 216 acres of adjacent forest. The land contains three miles of shoreline and provides much better recreational access between Upper and Middle Saranac Lakes, the Saranac River and Stony Creek, Franklin County.



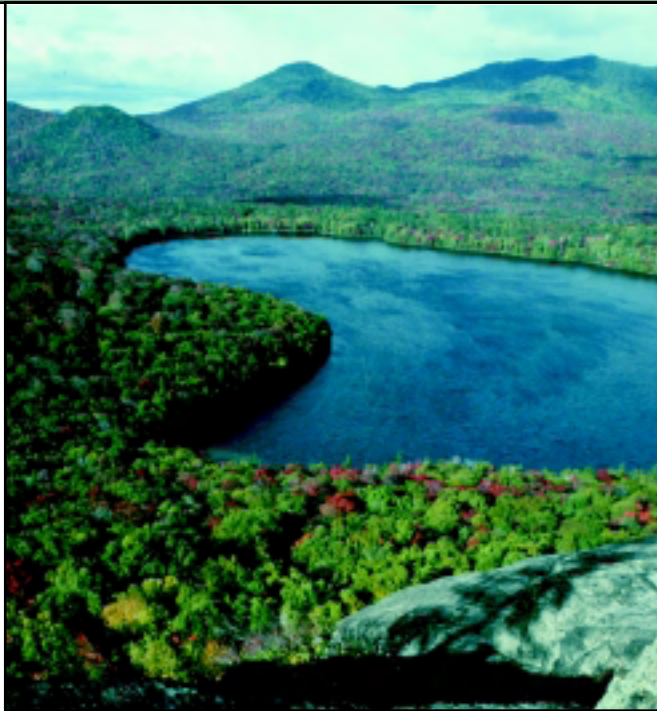
Cleaner Cars

Last November, the Governor announced tough new laws governing automobile emissions that would result in a 56 percent reduction in related air pollution within 20 years. New York and California are now the only states with auto emissions standards stricter than federal law requires.



Public Service Commissioned

In January, the Public Service Commission approved \$3 million per year for five years for the Environmental Monitoring, Evaluation, and Protection Program operated by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. The Adirondack Council had urged the



Clear Pond, adjacent to Bog Lake in Hamilton County, will become part of the Adirondack Council's proposed 408,000-acre Bob Marshall Great Wilderness.



Crotty at the Top

The Governor made an excellent choice to replace his long-time confidante John Cahill as Commissioner of the Dept. of Environmental Conservation when he chose former DEC attorney Erin Crotty. Last fall, the Governor called Cahill to service at the Capitol as his chief policy advisor. Crotty is the first woman to hold the office.



Stopping the Leaks

The Governor won well-deserved praise in April for his plan to offer low-interest loans to waterfront landowners with failing or inadequate septic systems,

buried fuel tanks or agricultural runoff. If approved by the Legislature, the loans would be available to homeowners, farmers and small business owners, especially around surface drinking water supplies. The Senate passed the Governor's bill and the Assembly moved on its own version.



Keep Talking

After a shaky start, the DOT has won back some confidence in its efforts to replace the 71-year-old, more than half-mile-long Batchellerville Bridge over the Great Sacandaga Lake in the Town of Edinburg, Saratoga County. DOT has published a newsletter detailing its two main proposals and has encouraged public comment. The bridge is too weak to carry fire trucks and other large emergency vehicles.

The project would cost more than \$30 million. DOT hopes to complete the design by 2003.



Right to Know

The Governor-appointed Public Service Commission in January directed power companies to begin illustrating on their bills exactly how the power was generated. Knowing the proportion of electricity produced using coal versus natural gas or hydro power will help conservation-minded consumers make a more informed choice about power providers.



Support Not Eroding

In January, the Governor provided \$1.8 million in flood control funding to communities along the Ausable and Boquet rivers in the eastern Adirondacks. There are sound conservation plans to replant trees and vegetative buffers. The banks are now crumbling into the rivers, causing rapid erosion and siltation.

Out in Front

The Governor found himself at odds with the Bush Administration in May when he appointed a special New York commission to recommend new ways to reduce carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to global climate change. Pataki told the press he favored international cooperation in reducing greenhouse gases, but wanted New York to help lead the way.

Neighbors, No Fences

The Governor signed an agreement last December with Vermont and the Province of Quebec extending the life of a 1996 cooperative program for the environmentally sensitive management of Lake Champlain and its immense watershed.


Investing in the Agency

The Governor's investment in the Adirondack Park Agency has started to show dividends, with 10 new staff added since the end of 1999. The agency is now much faster at answering inquiries from the public and appears to be getting its enforcement problems under control.

Four More Years

The Governor reappointed Katherine O. Roberts of Garrison to another term as an APA commissioner. Roberts is a strong voice for conservation and deserved another term.

Tapping Funds for Tupper

 In a July visit to Tupper Lake, the Governor announced that the state would provide \$2.5 million toward the construction of a \$13-million natural history museum on 31 acres of land donated by the Tupper Lake Central School District. Another \$6 million has been raised through donations to the capital campaign. Museum officials hope to break ground in 2003.

All Aboard

At the end of June, the Governor announced that the DOT would provide \$1.8 million in funding (on top of \$7.2 million in federal funds) to restore 40 miles of rail for scenic train service between North Creek, Warren County, and Corinth, Saratoga County. Plans include expanding the line to Saratoga Springs, where Amtrak passengers could transfer from lines that run between New York City and Montreal.

Oops, Where Did It Go?

Two of the Governor's agencies should have stayed out of the discussion about controlling Eurasian watermilfoil in Lake George. A grant from the Dept. of State helped pay for a flawed environmental assessment of the controversial proposal. The Office of General Services' decision to become a co-applicant for the APA permit has already caused an administrative law judge to assume OGS intended to grant permission to kill native endangered, threatened and rare plants along with the milfoil. The Lake George Park Commission barged forward with a six-year-old plan to apply a chemical herbicide to four sites in Lake George to kill "dense beds" of Eurasian milfoil, despite the fact that most of the milfoil had disappeared — on its own — from at least one of the four sites. In fact, in mid-summer, none of the sites proposed had beds dense enough to inhibit boat traffic. LGPC has expressed no interest in studying why there has been a natural decline in milfoil.

Say It Isn't So

Environmentalists and many government officials were dumbfounded to learn that the Pataki Administration had blocked the allocation of millions of dollars from the Environmental Protection Fund as lawmakers reached a budget deal in October. In the previous fiscal year, the EPF had provided \$125 million dollars for projects statewide to protect drinking water, build municipal parks, promote recycling and protect sensitive lands. Legislators left town this fall with hundreds of millions of dollars remaining locked in the fund and no money allocated, six months into the fiscal year. Ironically, the dedicated fund was created in 1993 specifically to insulate environmental funding from the ups and downs of the state budget.

Seat Still Empty

For the second consecutive year, the Governor has failed to fill a vacancy for an Adirondack Park resident on the Adirondack Park Agency board of commissioners. By law, the 11-member board is made up of three state officials, five Park residents and three state residents from outside the Park.



Gov. George Pataki enjoys a conversation with Adirondack Council Board Chair David Skovron.

State Legislature



Both Houses

Not Afraid of the Dark

Both houses of the Legislature passed a bill in June that would limit the use of outdoor lighting in certain areas and would require state agencies to replace their outdoor fixtures with energy-efficient equipment as old fixtures wear out. It would also allow the state to designate dark zones to provide better viewing of the night sky.

The bill was sponsored by Assem. Pete Grannis, D-Manhattan, and Sen. Michael Balboni, R-Mineola. It would prohibit light trespass, which is placement of light so that it affects privacy, sleep, or the appearance of someone's property without the owner's permission. The bill awaits the Governor's signature, although he has hinted that some minor amendments might be needed. The Council has worked with The Adirondack Nature Conservancy to protect the Clintonville Pine Barren, in Clinton County, where a rare species of moth was threatened by residential development and outdoor lighting.

Keene Swap Final


In June, both houses passed a bill that would make technical corrections to a previously passed bill, allowing an exchange of lands between the state and the Town of Keene. The exchange



In the town of Keene, 140 acres of land along the Ausable River will become state land.

required a Constitutional amendment, which was approved by the voters in November 1995. The changes were recommended by DEC and the Attorney General's office. The bill was sponsored by Assem. Richard Brodsky, D-Elmsford, and Assem. Elizabeth Little, R-Queensbury, and Sen. Ronald Stafford, R-Plattsburgh. The state will swap more than 140 acres along the Ausable River in exchange for 12 acres of state land adjacent to the town cemetery. The Governor signed the bill in September.

Mandate Relief Mandated

 Both houses passed a bill in June that would allow more Adirondack towns to conduct their own financial transactions without the NYS Comptroller's review. The Comptroller's review is triggered once the proportion of state lands located within the town reaches 10 percent of the town's taxable value. Senator Stafford and Assem. Denny Farrell, D-Manhattan, proposed the bill, which would increase that proportion to 30 percent. That would

allow towns such as Altamont, in Franklin County, to raise and spend capital project funds without state permission. Altamont recently urged the state not to purchase a parcel of land offered by Tupper Lake business Oval Wood Dish, citing the burden of a Comptroller's review as a reason for objecting to the purchase.

Rounding Up Rustlers

Both houses worked toward stiffer penalties for timber theft this year, despite disagreements over the details. Assem. Brodsky passed a bill to increase the penalties for stealing trees from the Forest Preserve early in the session. Sen. Stafford and Assem. William Parment, D-Ashville, each proposed identical bills that were slightly different from Brodsky's.



Richard Brodsky

Getting the Lead Out

Sen. Carl Marcellino, R-Syosset, and Assem. Steven Englebright, D-Setauket, proposed legislation this summer that would ban the use of small lead sinkers by anglers. Loons and at least 20 other species of waterfowl swallow lead sinkers, thinking them to be pebbles (which they swallow to aid digestion) or by consuming fish containing lost fishing tackle. As little as one tenth of an ounce of lead can kill an adult loon. Half of the loons killed in New York each year die of lead poisoning, according to State Wildlife Pathologist Ward Stone (winner of the Council's 2001 Public Service Award). There are inexpensive alternatives to lead sinkers readily available, including steel, brass, tin, glass and others. The bill did not pass either house.



Anti-Septic Solution

Both houses were pushing for approval of legislation that would prevent water pollution by providing low interest loans to homeowners and businesses that need to repair or replace failing septic systems. Senator Balboni gained Senate approval for Governor Pataki's program bill. Assem. Bill Magee, D-Nelson, amended his bill so it would apply specifically to septic systems in rural areas. As of press time, the Magee bill was under consideration by the Ways and Means Committee.

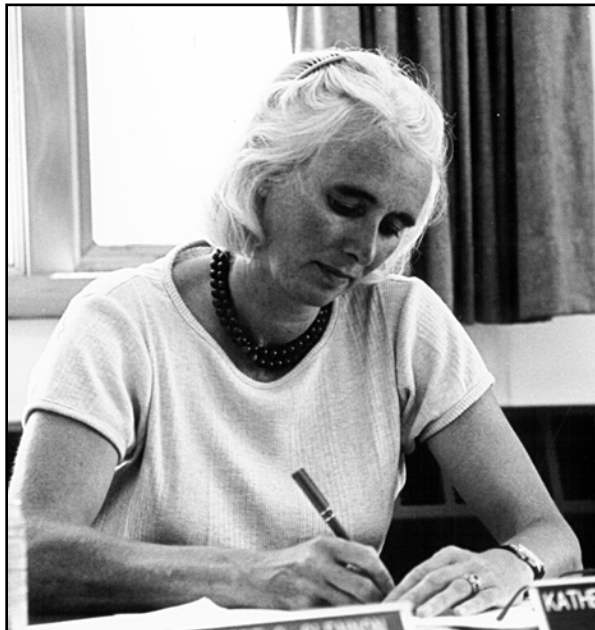
Frozen Assets

Through the course of a legislative session that has extended past press time in late October, both the Senate and the Assembly failed to act to appropriate monies from the "locked box" of the dedicated Environmental Protection Fund. While both houses contend that the Governor refused to negotiate this fall, earlier in the year legislators sent a baseline budget to the Governor that omitted the fund as well. The facts are stark: six months into the fiscal year, zero money has been allocated for environmental capital projects.

Senate

Re-Up for Roberts

The Senate quickly and without debate confirmed the Governor's appointment of Katherine O. Roberts to a second, four-year term on the Adirondack Park Agency. Roberts has been an environmental advocate and has served the APA board well.



Katherine O. Roberts, APA Commissioner

A Trench to Nowhere

Sen. James Wright, R-Watertown, and Assem. Robert Oaks, R-Macedon, and co-sponsor Chris Ortloff, R-Plattsburgh, should have excluded the Adirondack Park from a bill that encourages the construction of natural gas pipelines in isolated rural areas.

The bill calls for the construction of new lines into rural areas with the aim of attracting new growth. The bill is completely contradictory to the "smart growth" concepts the Legislature touts.

While the Senate bill was moving through the committee process, it has not yet advanced to the floor. To its credit, the Assembly's leadership took no action on the bill.

Constitutional Roulette

In a surprise move, the Senate approved a proposed amendment to the NYS Constitution to allow casinos to be built anywhere in the state — including the Adirondack Park. The Assembly did not immediately act on the measure, which will require passage by the Assembly before the end of 2002, second passage by both houses in 2003, and then approval by the voters the following November. The concurrent resolution was printed and passed by the Senate in the span of a few hours.

Assembly

Clearcut Solution

Assem. Brodsky proposed legislation that would discourage clearcutting in the Adirondacks. The bill would reduce from 25 acres to 3 acres the maximum upland acreage that could be clearcut without an Adirondack Park Agency permit. The maximum for wetlands is already 3 acres. Last year, the APA approved a plan to clearcut more than 300 wetland acres and another upland parcel on lands where the state had paid more than one million dollars for public recreational rights.

When the APA was asked how many non-jurisdictional clearcuts (less than 25 acres) occur each year, the agency noted that it kept no such records. Extending the APA's jurisdiction to smaller clearcuts would allow the APA to determine their prevalence and to require that conditions, such as wildlife surveys and reforestation plans be added to permits.

Not Gambling on Casinos

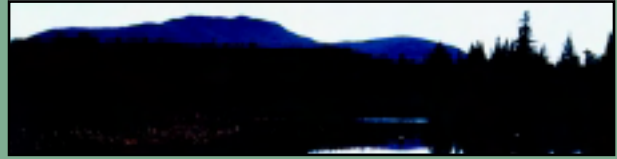
Assem. Jacob Gunther, D-Forestburgh, excluded the entire Adirondack Park from his legislation encouraging the construction of casinos in New York. Gunther hails from the Catskills, where local officials are urging the redevelopment of aging hotels into casinos.

No New ATV Routes

Assem. Joseph Morelle, D-Rochester, excluded state lands from his bill that would promote the development of all-terrain vehicle trails statewide. At the request of the Adirondack Council, the bill also prohibited the creation of new ATV routes on Forest Preserve. Morelle stuck to his position despite heavy lobbying by ATV user groups.



Local Governments



Banning, Together

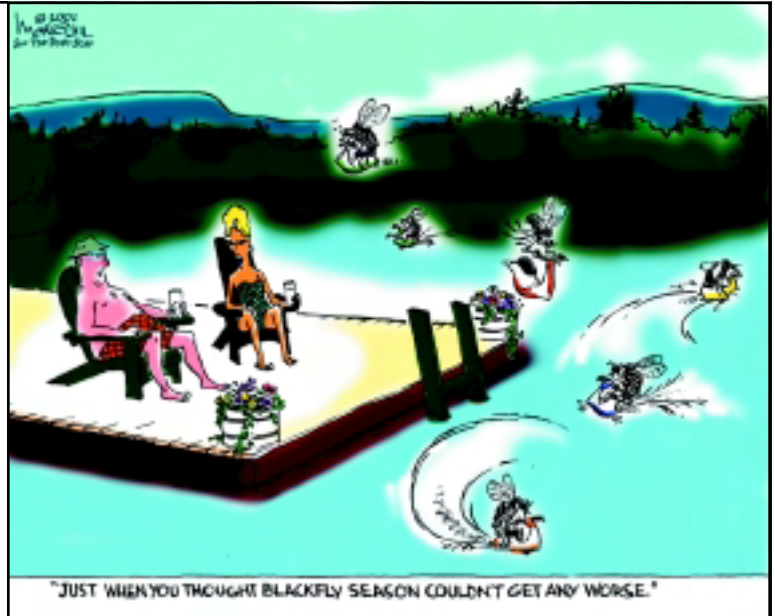
The Town of Johnsbury in April became the first community in New York State to ban the use of personal watercraft under the new Jet Ski Home Rule Act. Supervisor Bill Thomas made sure Garnet Lake, Thirteenth Lake and a stretch of the Hudson River were included in the law, which prohibits those craft from within 1,500 feet of shore. Since Thirteenth Lake and the Hudson are less than 3,000 feet wide, the ban runs from shore to shore. On Garnet Lake, the neighboring Town of Thurman owns roughly two-thirds of the shore. To effect a lakewide ban, Thurman must take similar action.

The Towns of Chester, Warren County, and Brighton, Essex County, became the second and third towns this year. Other lakes where shore owners are working with towns on jet ski bans include Big Moose Lake, Herkimer County, Loon Lake and Friends Lake, Warren County, and others.

Town of North Elba officials brokered a deal in July with a Lake

Placid marina to stop renting jet skis for the summer in exchange for no new regulations on their use. The marina wants to possibly rent them in the future for “guided, supervised tours of the lake.” Officials plan to review the summer’s experience and revisit the issue.

In Willsboro, Supervisor Teresa Sayward rejected a plea from Long Pond landowners in June to enact a ban. Instead, she proposed in July that the town set a horsepower limit. It was unclear at press time whether the idea will be pursued.



In Lake Pleasant, Hamilton County, officials are contemplating a July request from the Lake Pleasant-Sacandaga Association to limit jet skis to 5 miles per hour within 300 feet of shore and to ban them in rivers and tributaries.

Cell Co. Can't Turn Pilot Knob



The Town of Fort Ann, Washington County, in July turned down a proposal for a cell phone tower on Pilot Knob, a peninsula on the east shore of Lake George. A tower in that spot would have imposed a huge visual intrusion on the shore. In late September, the town enacted a 180-day moratorium on cell tower construction and is developing a townwide policy.

Pilot Knob in the town of Fort Ann is the proposed site for a new cell tower.



No More Speculating

After four years of research and revisions, the Village of Speculator's Mayor M. Collie Smith and board of trustees approved a local land-use code that meets the requirements set by the Adirondack Park Agency. The village will now have the authority to handle most small and medium-scale development projects. Such plans relieve the APA of the burden of reviewing projects with little or no regional impact. The western Adirondack towns of Inlet, Webb and Forestport are all working on similar local plans. The Town of Chesterfield, Essex County, has just adopted a new APA-approved comprehensive plan as well.

Stampede to Sanity

The Town of Perth, just south of the Park in Fulton County, did Park towns a favor recently by showing how a community can become an industrial site when there is no local zoning in place to protect open space. Perth was faced with a huge open-pit mining project that would have swallowed hundreds of acres over its 120-year life span. The project was later withdrawn by the developer when opposition signs went up all over town. But Perth's initial defenselessness led the Town Board to fast-track a comprehensive land-use plan. Like dominoes, the nearby Adirondack Park towns of Mayfield, Caroga, Northampton and Bleeker are prudently doing the same.

OK, It Really Is a Park

The Essex County Industrial Development Agency has launched a three-year \$180,000 marketing campaign extolling the quality-of-life virtues of opening a business in the Adirondack Park. The IDA hopes its "Essex County: In the Park" campaign will lure high-tech and service industry executives from big cities.

The plan is a big and welcome change for a county whose board of supervisors, just two years ago, voted to spend \$5,000 to investigate whether the NYS Legislature violated the state or federal constitution when it created the Adirondack Park Agency.

Flush with Success

The Town of Ticonderoga is finally getting a grip on some of the leaking septic tank

Green Leaders of Tomorrow Take Action

Fifth graders in the Brushton-Moira Central School, Franklin County, applied for and received a special grant from the state to distribute acid rain test kits to students throughout New York. They even created their own website

(www.rainwatchers.org) to post the collected data. The project began in Debra

LaBarr's class last year, when pupils studied acid rain's impact on sugar maple trees. Students are receiving and posting data from 17 school districts upstate. Sadly, as of press time, they hadn't received a single reading above 4.5 (more than 10 times as acidic as untainted rainfall) from an Adirondack school.



Meanwhile, On Long Island ...

The Long Beach School District, Nassau County, middle school science fair this spring featured a student-run program that illustrated the damage acid rain causes to local aquatic life.

problems that have caused untreated sewage to seep into Lake George's northern end for years. Some of the worst offenders were cited by the Lake George Park Commission. The LGPC essentially condemned the systems and required owners to use holding tanks that must be pumped out. Still, nearby streams flow with brown effluent. A sewage treatment system would cost homeowners \$1,100 to \$1,600 annually. A LGPC official told the press that such a high per-household cost would require approval from the State Comptroller. If Lake George is going to remain a pure drinking water supply, septic runoff must be stopped.

Planning for Tomorrow

The Town of Johnsbury, Warren County, is working to create a sewage treatment district and facility to accommodate 400 to 450 customers in the relatively compact hamlet of North Creek. The move will help keep effluent out of the Hudson River as the hamlet grows. Officials are exploring the possibilities of a cooperative arrangement on sewage treatment with state-owned Gore Mountain ski center. The hamlet's community center, town offices, theater and outdoor recreation complex are being consolidated on town land near Gore, to conserve open space and money.

What Makes Us Great

The communities of Inlet, North Creek, Star Lake and Wilmington have been working with the Adirondack Park Agency, the Wildlife Conservation Society and Paul Smith's College on the development of Adirondack Community Interpretive Centers. The centers are a smaller-scale version of the APA's two main visitor centers, with emphasis on local features and attractions.

A Taxing Argument

Town of Newcomb Assessor Lowell Stringer set the record straight in May when Finch, Pruyn & Co. officials tried to stop the school district from renovating its school building and recreational facilities. When absentee landlord Finch claimed that a homestead exemption for residents caused Finch to pay an unfairly high share of the local levy, Stringer pointed out that New York State's annual local tax payments on 62,534 acres of Forest Preserve are \$1.98 million (\$31.66 per acre) to the town, and \$1.71 million (\$27.35 per acre) to the school district. In contrast, Finch pays \$112,227 (\$2.12 per acre) and \$93,000 (\$1.75 per acre) respectively for 52,965 acres — all thanks to a state timberland property tax exemption. Finch sued the school district, lost and was ordered in October to pay a portion of the school district's legal fees.

👉 Boon or Bogey?

It's unclear whether the Town of Newcomb's plan to build a nine-hole golf course will fulfill the dreams of throngs of new tourists or turn 100 acres of town forest into the loneliest links on earth. The town worked with the APA to design a good plan that complied with the Park Agency's regulations on wetlands tree cutting, bridge construction, development near protected rivers and the use of fertilizers and pesticides near wetlands. The course is slated to open in 2003. The town can use landfill closure funds because the state picked up that tab, Supervisor George Canon told the press. Canon added that he would seek certification from Audubon International, Selkirk, which works with course owners to limit harm to the environment.

👉 Showing Our PRIDE

The Town of Ticonderoga and the PRIDE community preservation organization are using a \$10,000 state grant to remove junked cars and broken appliances from the lawns of local residences. The effort will prevent leaking gas, oil or anti-freeze from contaminating ground water and will beautify the community, officials said. The money was provided through a community beautification program created by Sen. Ronald Stafford, R-Plattsburgh.

👉 Trojan Horse

The Saratoga County Board of Supervisors' Public Safety Committee is preparing to roll a Trojan Horse through the gates of the Adirondack Park Agency in the form of a proposal for three 180-foot-tall telecommunications towers on the ridge lines above the Great Sacandaga Lake. The county's consultant recommended towers roughly half that height to improve emergency radio coverage in the west end of the county. The committee changed the plan to accommodate

commercial cell phone companies, according to news accounts. The plan calls for a private company to build, own and operate the towers and lease space to the county.

The county has begun eminent domain proceedings against an unwilling seller of land on a mountain near Hadley. Because the shore of the lake is Forest Preserve, development along the roadside is nearly invisible and the steep ridges above the shore roads are largely pristine. In contrast, the towers as proposed would be visible for miles.



Gary Heurich, Trustee, Sen. Ronald Stafford, Forrest Mars and John Ernst, Trustee, (left to right) discuss Park issues during a summer gathering.

👉 Pipe Down, Please

The Essex County Industrial Development Agency should drop its plans to ask for a state handout to build a "Field of Dreams" gas pipeline up to 70 miles through mostly open land from Port Douglas, Clinton County, southward to villages in Essex County. The idea is to induce growth in areas the pipeline passes, at a reputed price tag of nearly \$1 million per mile. Pipeline trenching bisects landscapes and can substantially disturb the environment.

👉 Doing the Limbo

Local officials in the Town of Schroon continued this summer to agitate for the reconstruction of the former hotel and resort at the now state-owned Scaroon Manor on the western shore of Schroon Lake. For 30 years since the state purchased the land, the town's wishes kept state officials from classifying and developing the parcel for public campground use. It already has an interior road network, a long, sandy beach and concrete pier.

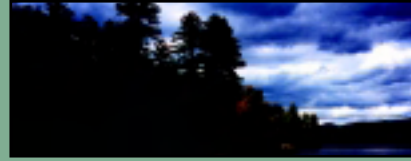
Meanwhile, the only other state campground on the lake, Eagle Point, suffers from overuse on its steep slopes. Scaroon's gentle landscape could host 60 or more overnight campsites, as well as day use and environmental education programs without violating the Forever Wild clause. The communities of Schroon Lake, Chestertown and Pottersville could all benefit from the presence of hundreds of additional campers and day trippers.

In addition, a Forest Preserve designation for the site would require the state to pay the towns of Schroon and Chester, and their school districts, full local property taxes on the parcel. This would bring tens of thousands of dollars of new revenue to each taxing district. The state has made no such payments since acquiring the property, mainly due to the joint town/state refusal to recognize the land as Forest Preserve.



The Scaroon Manor site on the west shore of Schroon Lake.

Attorney General



A Legal Boost for Disabled



The Attorney General's team spent two years crafting a win-win settlement in a lawsuit challenging the state's new policy for disabled access to the Forest Preserve. The disabled plaintiffs initially sought millions of dollars in compensation and the opening of closed roads throughout the Forest Preserve. Their list included Wilderness paths. Instead, the settlement made available many new opportunities for motorized access by the disabled, while protecting Wilderness and directing new investments in campgrounds and other places more heavily used by people with disabilities. In addition, the state will pay for a horse-and-wagon service for disabled access to Great Camp Santanoni in Newcomb, and will train staff to assist the disabled in backcountry excursions.



Uncloaked

The Attorney General won the gratitude of the Adirondack Council and others when his legal team forced the plaintiffs to reveal their identities in a lawsuit over the state's newest acid rain law. When the suit was filed, the Adirondack Council offered a reward to anyone who could provide the identities of the plaintiffs. Spitzer forced at least two companies to identify themselves before the suit could be heard in U.S. District Court in Albany: NRG Energy of Minnesota (owners of the two dirtiest coal-fired plants in New York) and Mirant Energy, a subsidiary of The Southern Company (owners of several plants in the lower Hudson Valley). The case was still pending at press time.

The so-called Clean Air Markets Group wants to overturn a law that prevents New York's power generators from profiting from the sale of leftover federal pollution allowances that result in sulfur dioxide emissions that harm the Adirondacks. Any sales or trades that result in emissions from 14 upwind states automatically trigger a penalty.



Holding Smoky Feet to the Fire

Last fall, Attorney General Eliot Spitzer persuaded the Virginia Electric Power Co. to agree to settle a lawsuit he brought against the company for violations of federal clean air laws. In December, Spitzer's suit brought Cinergy Corp. of Cincinnati to the bargaining table as well. Cinergy too agreed to settle the case and make pollution cuts deep enough to vastly reduce the company's impact on the Adirondack Park's forests and waters. In both cases, the companies agreed to multi-million-dollar fines and will spend millions more on regional environmental projects. Other defendants have refused to negotiate so far, although some in-state violators have come to the table.



Deflating a Bad Trial Balloon

Attorney General Eliot Spitzer garnered national media attention for acid rain in April when he burst President Bush's trial balloon of weakening federal enforcement of clean air laws. Bush Administration officials were talking openly about a plan

to stop enforcing the federal statute that requires power companies to add new pollution control technology when they renovate or expand older power plants. Many Midwest plants that harm the Adirondacks were exempted from federal clean air standards in the 1970s because the owners persuaded regulators that the plants would soon close. Spitzer testified at a public hearing in Boston that if the Bush Administration refused to enforce the law, it would undermine Spitzer's lawsuits, and those brought by other Northeastern states.



Make that 92 Years & Counting

For the first time in a century, the timber industry this session endorsed new penalties for theft of trees from the Forest Preserve. The penalty for stealing Forest Preserve trees has been \$10 each since 1909. But the Attorney General's inflexible position scuttled a two-house agreement. Both houses walked away from the table, leaving a potential agreement on theft from private lands in limbo.

Adirondack Park Agency



Remedial Education for DEC

In August, the APA signed an enforcement agreement with the Dept. of Environmental Conservation in an effort to repair damage done when DEC personnel cut and bulldozed thousands of Forest Preserve trees along the Bear Pond Road, in the Watson's East Triangle, Herkimer County.

DEC's actions constituted the most egregious violation of the NYS Constitution's Forever Wild clause in the 31-year history of the department. APA ordered revegetation and required DEC to consult with the APA before altering any roadway in the Adirondacks. Last year, the Adirondack Council had petitioned the DEC and APA to declare the Watson's East property as Wilderness, where no motorized access would be allowed. DEC instead classified it as Wild Forest and decided on its own to make major expansions of the road over a 10.7-mile stretch.



Catching Up

After the Adirondack Council published its second report in 15 months criticizing the glacial pace of the agency's enforcement program, the APA has hired additional staff and begun to make a dent in thousands of backlogged cases. This summer, the APA announced that, for the first time in a decade or more, the agency was resolving more cases than it was opening. The APA board also announced that it would be revising its enforcement policies to force a quicker resolution of permit violations and non-permitted construction.



Please Try Again

The APA staff and board agreed in August that the application for a permit to apply aquatic pesticides to Lake George was flawed and could not be approved in its current form. The board took the staff's recommendation and voted unanimously to send the application to a formal hearing in October and November 2001. The Lake George Park Commission wants permission to poison Eurasian watermilfoil with fluoridone (brand name Sonar), which can kill beneficial native plants and may taint drinking water within a quarter-mile of its application.

Tower Expansion Snakebit



The APA wisely turned away an application this summer from the owners of WIZN-FM radio in Vergennes, Vt., who had asked permission to nearly double the size of their transmission tower on Rattlesnake Mountain in the Town of Willsboro, Essex County. The APA found that the applicant had not adequately examined other alternatives, including erecting a tower in central Vermont — the area it wanted its signal to reach. The Council participated as a party in the hearing.



Snappier Judgements

The APA announced in March that it had made a substantial improvement in its ability to respond to the public, due to staff additions and technological improvements. The average waiting time for an applicant to learn if a permit is needed dropped from 63 days to seven.



Yes, We Can Say No

From 1990 to 2000, the APA approved more than 5,000 development permits, while denying only five. Number six came this year when the commissioners denied a variance for a guest house on Lower Saranac Lake. The APA investigated the record of the case and

found that the property owners had been told by the 1986 Agency board of commissioners that it would grant permission to convert a boathouse to a residence, but that no additional development would be allowed on the property. The Agency is in the process of changing the definition of a boat house to prevent such conversions.



No Old Permit?

No New Permit

In January, the Park Agency ordered NYCO Minerals and the Essex County Board of Supervisors to get a permit for — or remove — the radio tower the county erected without one in 1987 on NYCO's Seventy Hill Road mine in the Town of Lewis, Essex County. The Agency said it wouldn't approve changes NYCO has requested in one of its mining permits until the tower issue was resolved.



Breathing Space

The APA will spend \$1.5 million renovating and improving its 30-year-old building in Ray Brook. The building was too cramped for the expanding staff. The renovations will also bring the building into compliance with state health codes and federal laws requiring disabled access.

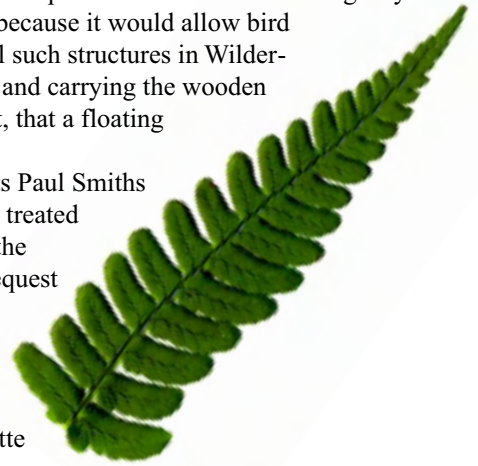
The Plastic Wilderness

Months after the conclusion of open meetings with public participation, the Dept. of Environmental Conservation quietly sought to alter a permit to construct a wooden boardwalk at Ferd's Bog within the Pigeon Lake Wilderness. The result was an illegal plastic intrusion into the Forest Preserve, the waste of thousands of dollars in materials and the squandering of staff time that will be required to remove the structure.

Building a boardwalk (or any other structure) in any Adirondack wetland requires permission from the Park Agency. A 500-foot-long viewing platform at Ferd's Bog was acceptable, the APA agreed, because it would allow bird watchers to visit the bog without trampling its fragile vegetative cover. By law, all such structures in Wilderness Areas must be built of natural materials. DEC staff complained that building and carrying the wooden sections through the forest was too difficult. They predicted, without trying it first, that a floating wooden boardwalk would be too tipsy.

The APA had already constructed at least one floating wooden boardwalk at its Paul Smiths Visitor Interpretive Center, and had issued a guidebook on the safe use of pressure treated lumber in Adirondack wetlands. Without consulting the APA's commissioners or the permit officer in charge, a senior APA staff member simply responded to DEC's request and altered the permit to allow the use of plastic.

DEC barged ahead and installed a light-colored plastic walkway. The plastic sections are solid, preventing air and sunlight from passing through to the vegetation below. Wooden boardwalks have openings that allow sunlight to penetrate, allowing covered sections to remain alive. Ferd's Bog is west of Raquette Lake, Hamilton County.



Clearcut Problem

The APA approved a permit in November that allowed the largest clearcut in the agency's history. APA gave permission to a timber company to clearcut 301 acres of softwood forest in wetlands, plus one 27-acre plot on solid ground — all on lands where the state holds a conservation easement. The APA, at a minimum, should have required a forest management plan, including an assessment of impacts on sensitive species and ecosystems, and calculations showing that the rate of harvest is sustainable. The state purchased the public recreation rights to the property three years ago for more than \$1 million.

Let's Try This Again

After receiving only one bid on its request for proposals in January, the APA hired a local consulting firm that represents cell phone tower builders to advise the APA on a new cell tower policy. In August, the firm predictably submitted a report that encouraged the proliferation of towers along the Park's roadsides. Better late than never, the APA board decided in August that it "needed more work."

In October, the APA released an edited version for public comment which

contained many of the flaws in the old one. It still presumed a need for tower-based personal communications devices in the Park; implied incorrectly that there is inadequate access to telephone service or emergency services; and, assumed that a roadside network is needed and desirable in undeveloped areas, where towers would cause the most damage.

In fact, the agency had announced that it would distribute a copy of the draft policy to a wide range of experts from other planning institutions such as the New Jersey Pinelands Commission and the Cape Cod Commission. Instead, it obtained only a cursory review from a couple of New York State agencies before declaring the draft complete.

Aside from aesthetic/tourism concerns, such towers require the clearing of land on mountain slopes, where erosion can cause rapid environmental degradation. The wires used to support tall towers can also become a navigational hazard for birds.

Gagging on Public Comment

In January, the APA was considering a plan to restrict public comment on pending permit applications. The APA said it would cut off all comments several days prior to each monthly meeting. Since the monthly agenda is mailed less than a week in advance of the meetings, the public would have had only 24 to 48 hours to review and comment on any new project, regardless of its size or impact. The January plan also called for a censorship board to determine whether to accept late comments. The Council objected and the APA relented, setting the deadline at noon the day before the monthly meeting and eliminating the censorship board.

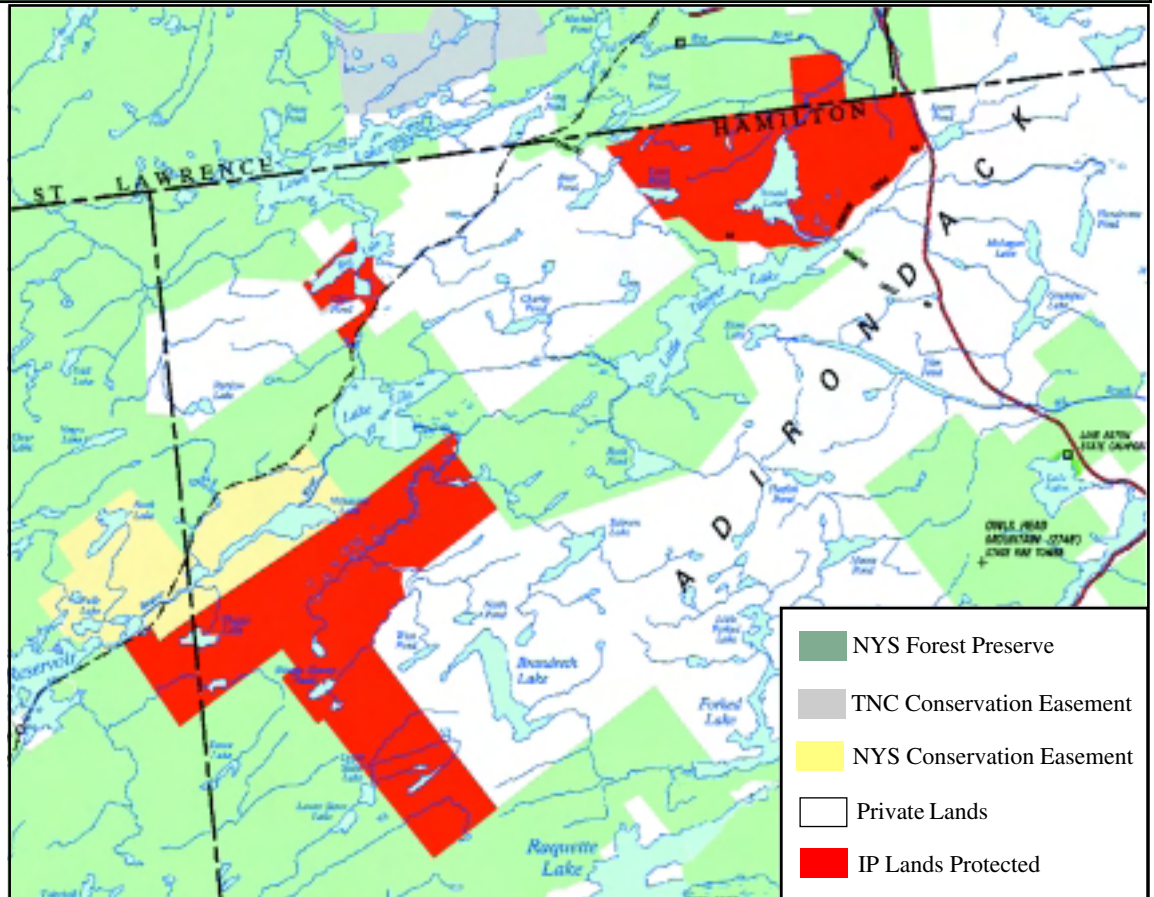
Where's Rochester?

When soliciting public comment for proposed revisions to its rules and regulations for developers, the APA should be reaching out to a broader audience. The practice thus far has been to hold only two hearings inside the Park and two outside. The hearings outside the Park are generally in the Capital District and New York City, ignoring millions of New Yorkers who live west of Schenectady.

Department of Environmental Conservation

Bob Gets Closer to Home

The Department worked hard to negotiate a spectacular forest land conservation deal in January. This deal helps bring the Council's proposal for a 408,000-acre Bob Marshall Great Wilderness a step closer to reality. DEC worked with The Adirondack Nature Conservancy, ensuring that the state will play a role in protecting 26,500 acres of forests, lakes and rivers in the central Adirondacks, owned by International Paper Company. The lands are to be protected through a combination of conservation easements on private land and outright purchases for addition to the public Forest Preserve. Included in the purchases were Bog Lake and Clear Pond (within the Bob Marshall area), and Round Lake and Loon Pond, just to the north. The majority of the land is located in the Shingle Shanty Brook area, south of Lake Lila, Hamilton County.



Courtesy of The Adirondack Nature Conservancy/Adirondack Land Trust

Brand New UMPS

After languishing for decades, the DEC's planning process for individual blocks of Forest Preserve is now fully underway. These "Unit Management Plans" allow the basic guidelines of the State Land Master Plan to be applied to, and tailored to, more than 90 specific Wilderness, Wild Forest, Primitive, Canoe and Intensive Use Areas throughout the Park. The plans contain such details as future road closings, footbridge construction/replacement, trail maintenance and development, traffic restrictions and camping regulations. The

Governor set an ambitious goal of completing all of the plans by 2004. The Department is well on its way.

Welcome to the Team

In recognition of the fact that acid rain research is a critical need in the Adirondacks, the Department has incorporated the Adirondack Lakes Survey Corp. into the Division of Air Resources. The ALSC measures changes in the Park's aquatic ecosystems, performing a monthly survey of selected lakes to check for acidity and gauge its impact. Its new director is Karen Roy, formerly the Adirondack Park Agency's aquatic ecologist. Karen replaced Walt Kretser, who retired last year. The ALSC's work has added critical data to the debate for new legislation to control acid rain, and is recognized for its sound research and scientific discoveries, including the phenomenon of springtime

acid shock. Acid shock occurs when the winter's acidic snowpack melts into the Park's waterways, making the water inhospitable for emerging life.

Smoother Sledding

This spring, the Department began preparing a comprehensive snowmobiling plan for the Adirondacks. It should emphasize the creation of trail connections, on routes that closely parallel existing travel corridors and on private lands where it owns conservation easements. The plan is still in the development stages, but will help the Department outline snowmobiling opportunities in the 90-plus Unit Management Plans it is drafting for approval by 2004.



Uncoordinated

The APA staff and board wisely agreed in August that the Lake George Park Commission's application for a permit to poison Eurasian watermilfoil with fluoridone in Lake George was flawed and could not be approved in its current form. DEC has refused to participate in joint hearings with the APA on the project, even though it, too, must issue a permit.



Dept. of Environmental Conversation

DEC committed the worst violation of the constitutional protection of the Adirondack Forest Preserve in DEC's 31-year history this summer. Worse yet, the outrage was just the latest in a long string of DEC abuses in recent years.

This summer, to accommodate motorized traffic, DEC personnel allowed thousands of trees to be cut and bulldozed along a 10.7-mile section of Bear Pond Road in the Watson's East Triangle, Herkimer County. DEC violated the Forever Wild clause of the NYS Constitution, which bans the unnecessary cutting of Forest Preserve trees and prohibits DEC from altering the land's "wild forest character." It also violated an agreement with the Adirondack Park Agency to consult with the APA before undertaking major projects anywhere in the Park.

The Council strongly urged the Adirondack Park Agency to classify the area as Wilderness last summer, but DEC officials objected, saying traffic could be controlled.

The action came as DEC was still wiping the egg off its face from public scoldings it sustained for illegal construction activity at Camp Santanoni, in Newcomb; for savaging 10 miles of trailside trees in the Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest, near Newcomb; and, for allowing inmate work crews to do the same at Moose Pond, north of Saranac Lake.

A Disturbing Trend

This summer, without public notice, DEC reissued itself a controversial permit to construct a concrete dam and plastic water-level gauge in the middle of the Park's most famous trout stream. Its permits were inadequate. The dam was illegal. The plastic gauge was illegal. And there was very little anyone could do about it.

DEC first proposed the dam in 1999 to determine whether snowmaking equipment at Whiteface Mountain would draw too much

water and harm the world-famous West Branch of the Ausable River. Rather than taking a simple, accurate depth reading with minimal disturbance to the river, DEC wanted to build a concrete dam with a plastic yardstick. The Council and others objected to the dam and the plastic gauge. Both violated the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act, we argued. DEC backed off and abandoned the permit process.

Before anyone realized what was happening this summer, a road was constructed and earth moving equipment appeared next to the river. The Council contemplated legal action, but realized that it could not stop DEC from installing the dam. Since DEC administers all stream crossing/disturbance permits, it has the power to grant itself a variance. The best the Council could manage through legal channels would have been to force DEC to issue itself an amended permit.

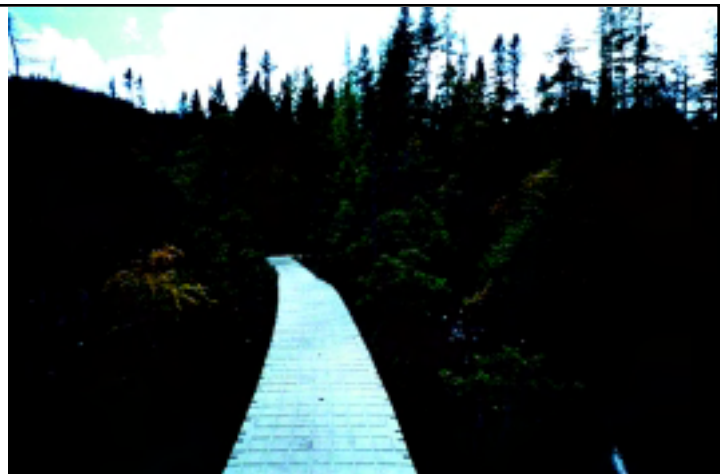
The Council has persuaded DEC to fix problems with the settling ponds it created to keep silt and road salts out of the river.



Issuing itself a permit to construct an illegal weir on the West Branch of the Ausable River, the DEC added yet another violation to a growing list.

What Were They Thinking?

DEC violated its own Unit Management Plan for the Pigeon Lake Wilderness last fall when it installed a plastic boardwalk in Ferd's Bog, just west of Raquette Lake, Hamilton County. DEC had agreed to install a wooden floating boardwalk in the bog to accommodate a large amount of foot traffic by bird watchers. Such structures are usually banned in Wilderness. When they are allowed, they must be made of natural materials, according to the State Land Master Plan. DEC complained to an Adirondack Park Agency staff member that the delivery and construction were too difficult. DEC persuaded the APA to change the permit, without public notice, to allow DEC to install a plastic walkway into the Wilderness. DEC did so by helicopter.



Federal Government



Acid Rain Damage in the Adirondacks

On the first day of session this year, U.S. Reps. John Sweeney, R-Halfmoon, John McHugh, R-Watertown, and Sherwood Boehlert, R-Utica, introduced the *Acid Rain Control Act*. Later on, U.S. Sens. Charles Schumer and Hillary Clinton introduced an identical bill in the Senate. The legislation would require nationwide cuts in sulfur dioxide (50 percent) and nitrogen oxides (70 percent) that are sufficient to stop the damage acid rain is causing throughout the United States.



On the Same Page

For the first time since 1990, both houses of Congress and the President are working toward legislation that would stop the destruction caused by acid rain. All of the proposals would require deep cuts in sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide smoke-stack emissions — the two principal components of acid rain. In addition, all of the proposals would regulate mercury emissions from power plants for the first time.

Although this summer the President refused to propose mandatory carbon dioxide cuts, he did propose a national energy policy that included measures to curb acid rain. While the Bush Administration plan released in March was lacking in detail, the administration promised to present legislation by the end of 2001.

The House of Representatives has been considering the *Acid Rain Control Act* since January. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee invited the Adirondack Council to a “stakeholder meeting” held in October so the Senate could begin its mark-up of a smokestack pollution bill by year’s end.



Mercury Falling

The Bush Administration, through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, asked the U.S. Court of Appeals in April to uphold a Clinton Administration decision to regulate emissions of mercury from coal-fired power plants. The Edison Electric Institute had sued EPA to halt the

regulation of mercury. Exposure to mercury, most often through fish consumption, has been linked to neurological and developmental damage in humans, especially fetuses and young children. This spring, the NYS Health Department announced that five more Adirondack lakes contained fish contaminated with mercury at levels too high for human consumption. Twenty lakes in the Adirondacks now have mercury warnings.



A Few Quid for Bob

Just prior to press time, the House Interior Appropriations Committee approved an earmark of \$2 million in the federal budget for a Forest Legacy Program grant to the state. The money would be used to help the state complete a crucial transaction with The Nature Conservancy for lands formerly owned by International Paper Co. The Conservancy and state agreed in January to protect 26,500 acres of forests, lakes and streams. Most of the lands and lakes are located within the Council’s proposed 408,000-acre Bob Marshall Great Wilderness.

Neither Rain, Nor Sleet ...



On the morning after a nasty ice storm in Lake Placid in February, Congressman Sherwood Boehlert battled his way to the 90-meter Olympic ski jump tower to hold a press conference

on acid rain. While the plan was to discuss why Congressmen John Sweeney, John McHugh and Boehlert were co-sponsoring the *Acid Rain Control Act*, treacherous roads had prevented Sweeney and McHugh from arriving on time. Boehlert gave a statement and remained until the last question was answered. He announced he would hold hearings in Washington, which he later did. Members of McHugh’s staff were also on hand in Lake Placid.

Sweeney held a second press conference in Albany on the following Monday during a meeting of the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages, at the Desmond Hotel. Sweeney vowed to use his clout as a member of the House Appropriations Committee to persuade other members of Congress to support acid rain legislation.



Congressman
John McHugh



Congressman
Sherwood Boehlert

Spreading the Word

In May, Senators Schumer and Clinton, and Congressman Sweeney enthusiastically participated in the first national acid rain conference held in more than 10 years. The conference, co-sponsored by the Adirondack Council and a host of scientific and environmental organizations, featured state-of-the-art science presentations and political discussions aimed at enacting new legislation to control the problem. Immediately following the conference, House Science Committee Chairman Boehlert held a hearing on acid rain on Capitol Hill. Congressman McHugh was one of nearly a dozen House members from New York, New England, Texas and the Midwest who expressed support for new emissions standards.

A Public Endorsement

Last December, Senator Schumer traveled to Lake Pleasant, Hamilton County, to announce that he and Senator Clinton would sponsor the *Acid Rain Control Act*. He also viewed the premiere of the Adirondack Council's mini-documentary, *Acid Rain: An Adirondack Tragedy*. After seeing the film, Schumer offered to send a letter to every public television station in America, urging them to play it often. This fall, Schumer and Congressman McHugh worked with their colleagues to distribute the video to every member of Congress.

Something Better than Nothing

In March, Congressman Sweeney publicly called upon the Bush Administration to at least fix the nation's acid rain problem if Bush was unwilling to make mandatory cuts in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Sweeney pointed out that there was little controversy over the need to cut sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. He added that the cost/benefit analysis performed by the Environmental Protection Agency showed that cutting acid rain would return \$60 billion in benefits for every \$3 billion spent.



Participants at the first national acid rain conference held in ten years include, left to right: Radmila Miletich, Legislative Director, the Adirondack Council; Dick Lefebvre, Chairman, Adirondack Park Agency; David Gibson, Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks; Bernard Melewski, Counsel and Acting Executive Director, the Adirondack Council; Neil Woodworth, Adirondack Mountain Club; U.S. Senator Charles Schumer; Jeff Fullmer, Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE); Robert Foster, CCE; William Cook, Audubon New York.

Renouncing a Rollback

Congressman Boehlert in July sharply criticized a Bush Administration plan to cut the EPA's enforcement and regulatory staff and turn their functions over to individual states. Midwestern states have spent decades fighting new federal air pollution standards and avoiding enforcing existing standards. Boehlert told the press that the plan was exactly the opposite of what even the business community had requested of Congress. He said power companies told him they would rather have consistent standards from state to state to make compliance less complicated. Sadly, Boehlert was the only upstate Republican to criticize the Bush proposal.

New Rules for Old Plants

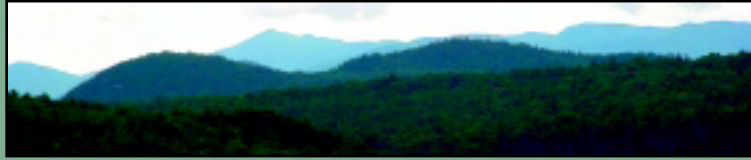
The Bush Administration shouldn't have even hinted in May that it wanted to stop enforcing a portion of the Clean Air Act known as New Source Review. NSR requires power companies that renovate or increase capacity at their oldest plants to meet the stricter pollution standards set for new power plants. This section of law was the basis for NYS Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's suits against more than a

dozen power companies whose emissions of sulfur dioxide were not controlled when plants were updated or expanded. The same law was the basis for EPA's subsequent suit against a larger number of companies. Until the Bush Administration proposes, and the President signs, legislation that would cut emissions from power plants to levels that won't harm the Adirondacks, it should continue to enforce the NSR standard and support Spitzer's efforts.




Adirondack Council Communication Director John Sheehan and Senator Hillary Clinton participated in the Acid Rain conference in Washington, D.C.


COURTS




Undeclared Champion

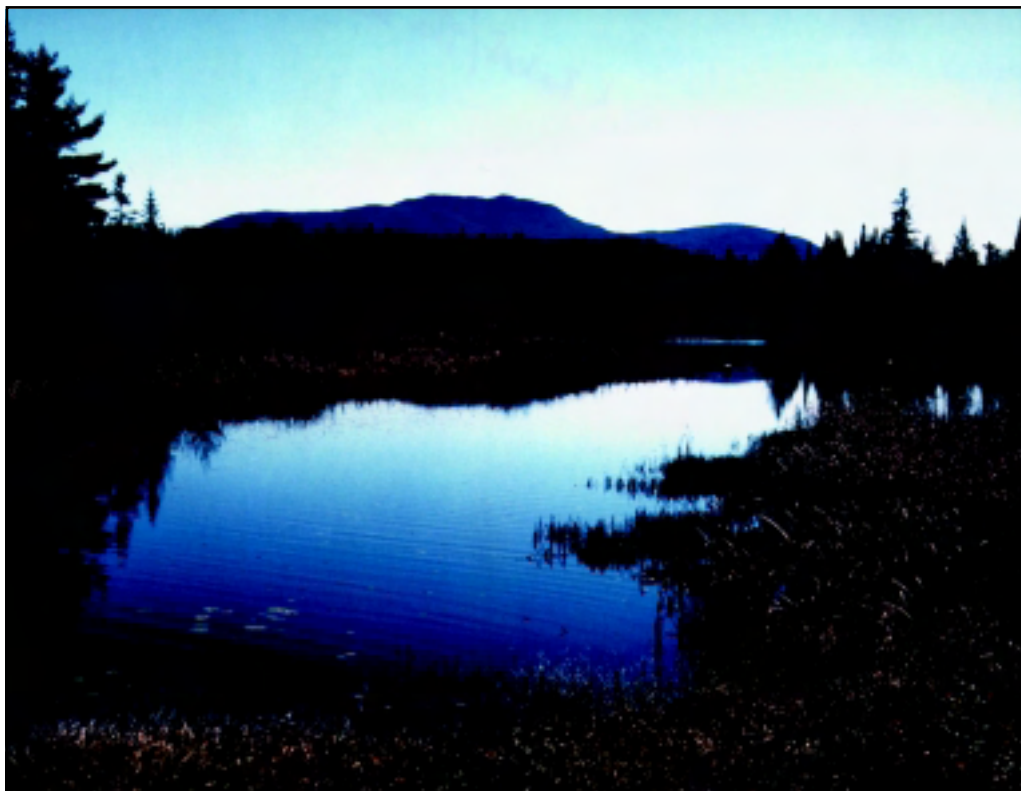
 In April, the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court affirmed the Supreme Court's November 2000 dismissal of a lawsuit seeking to overturn a major conservation deal. Plaintiffs claimed that the state's \$25-million purchase of 29,000 acres of Forest Preserve and 110,000 acres of conservation easements from Champion International was flawed. The court reaffirmed a lower court's dismissal, agreeing that the plaintiffs were months late with their suit against the Adirondack Park Agency and had waited too long to serve papers on defendants. The suit was filed against several state officials, seven weeks after the longest statute of limitations (four months) had expired. State officials said it was unlikely the case would be heard by the Court of Appeals.

Supremely Good Decision

 In February, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously rejected an electric power industry attack on the Clean Air Act. The court ruled that in setting national air quality standards, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency must consider only the requirements of public health and safety and may not engage in the cost-benefit analysis the industry groups wanted to import into the statute. The decision allowed EPA to move forward with new rules on summertime nitrogen emissions that cause smog and fine particles of sulfur dioxide (soot). Both pollutants cause acid rain. In addition, the court rejected the industry's claim, and a lower court ruling, that Congress could not delegate authority to EPA to set the standards.

Catching the Drift

 In March, U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia upheld the EPA's requirement that 12 Midwestern, Southern and Northeastern states curb their emissions of nitrogen oxides, which cause acid rain year-round and smog in the summer. Each of the states causes a problem for its neighbors when prevailing winds carry their air pollution across state lines.



Part of the Deer River Flow (pictured) within the Champion International Lands has been protected with a combination of a Forest Preserve purchase and conservation easements.

2001 Award Winners



NYS Assemblyman Richard Brodsky was the winner of the Adirondack Council's highest honor, the Conservationist of the Year Award, at the Council's 2001 Annual Awards Banquet, July 14.

In 1997, **Richard Brodsky** won the Adirondack Council's Legislative Leadership Award for his authorship of the laws that created the state's Environmental Protection Fund and the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act; for his tireless efforts to protect and enhance sensible land-use planning; and, for his work in stemming the expansion of clearcutting in the Adirondacks.

Since that time, as chairman of the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee he has continued to protect and enhance the natural character and communities of the Adirondack Park. Each year since 1997, he has sought to increase the penalties for those who steal trees from the Forest Preserve from the \$10 pittance enacted in 1909, to a more realistic amount of \$250 per tree, plus treble damages.

Brodsky has championed legislation to discourage New York utility companies from selling their leftover air pollution credits to companies that cause acid rain in the Adirondacks. His perseverance on acid rain paid off last summer, when the Governor signed Chairman Brodsky's bill. It is the first such law in the nation.

In 1998, Brodsky found money in the state budget to help fix the pollution problem at the state fish hatchery on Upper Saranac Lake. He found the money to repair the state's aging bridges leading into the Great Camp Sagamore, near the hamlet of Raquette Lake. And he appropriated the first state grant toward the completion of the new Adirondack Research Library in Niskayuna.

Last year, sensing correctly that the money from the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act would not last forever, Chairman Brodsky toured the state's newspaper editorial boards advocating an increase in the Environmental Protection Fund from \$100 million per year to \$150 million. This year, he proposed legislation to carry out that plan.



Assemblyman Richard Brodsky (left) accepts the Conservationist of the Year Award from Counsel and Acting Executive Director Bernard Melewski.

This year, Brodsky once again has sponsored legislation that would widen the Adirondack Park Agency's jurisdiction over clearcutting. He is sponsoring legislation that would regulate the siting of structures and roads on leased lands; create a task force to study the potential for reducing road salt use for de-icing; and, provide a comprehensive revamping of the Park's land-use laws to protect water quality and wildlife habitat.

Also receiving awards at the banquet were:

Public Service Award: Ward Stone has been the outspoken director of the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation's wildlife pathology lab in Bethlehem for 32 years. His work in warning the public of the dangers of lead shot, lead sinkers and the pesticides used to combat West Nile virus has made a huge impact on public policy statewide. His first concern is always the safety of his fellow New Yorkers, not political consequences for speaking out.

Park Communicator Award: The Albany *Times-Union* received the Park Communicator Award for more than a dozen editorials focusing on Adirondack environmental issues, as well as for the paper's Summer 2000 three-part series on the decline of water quality in Adirondack lakes.

Park Stewardship Award: International Paper, which started as an Adirondack company in 1898 and has grown to the largest paper company on earth, was recognized for its permanent protection of 26,500 acres of land and lakes in the west-central Adirondacks in 2001, and a series of other conservation projects.

Park Heritage Award: Adirondack Rock & River Guide Service won the award for carrying on the finest traditions of the legendary guides of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Park Educator Award: Adirondack Park Agency Visitor Interpretive Centers won for their outstanding educational and interpretive programs at the Newcomb and Paul Smiths facilities, which have served more than 1 million people since opening in 1989.



A wildlife pathologist for over 32 years, Ward Stone (left) received a loon print by artist Anne Lacy and the Public Service Award for his commitment to public health in New York. Dean Cook (right), Adirondack Council Trustee, presented the award.

The Adirondack Park

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

More than half of the Adirondack Park is private land, devoted principally to hamlets, forestry, agriculture and open-space recreation. The Park is home for 130,000 permanent and 110,000 seasonal residents, and hosts ten million visitors yearly.

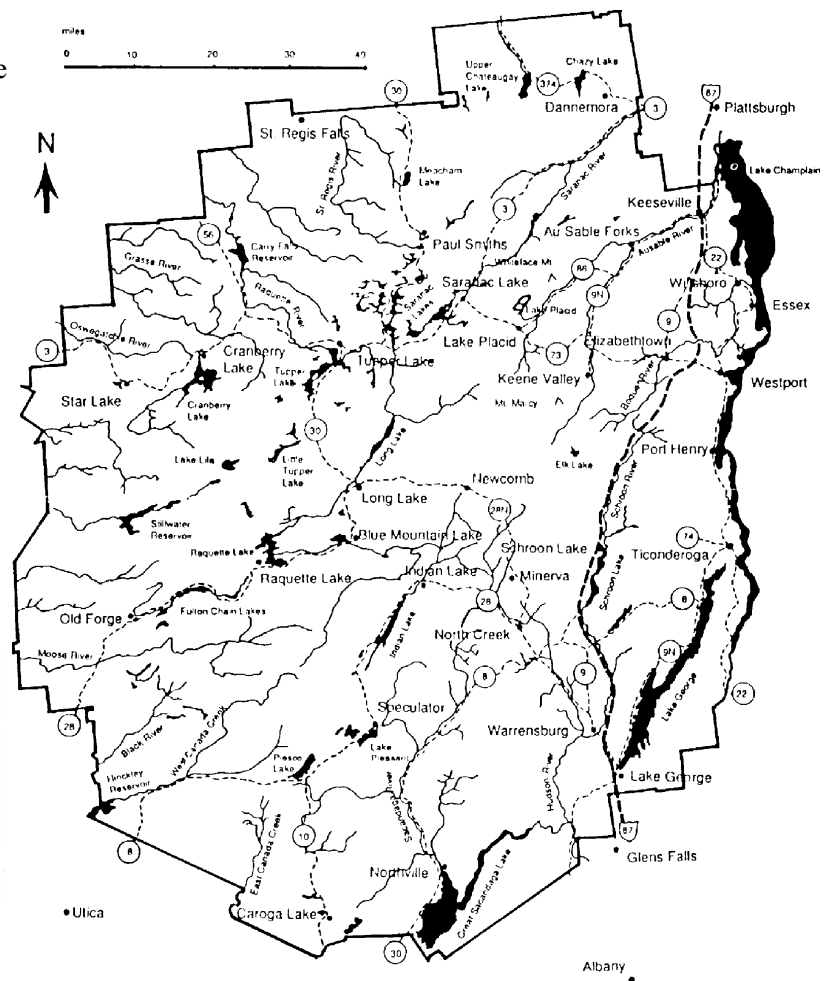
The remaining 45 percent of the Park is publicly owned Forest Preserve, protected as "Forever Wild" by the NYS Constitution since 1894. One million acres of these public lands are protected as Wilderness, where non-mechanized recreation may be enjoyed. The majority of the public land (more than 1.3 million acres) is Wild Forest, where motorized uses are permitted on designated waters, roads and trails.

Plants and wildlife abound in the Park. Old growth forests cover more than 100,000 acres of public land. The western and southern Adirondacks are gentle landscapes of hills, lakes, wetlands, ponds and streams. In the northeast are the High Peaks. Forty-three of them rise above 4,000 feet and 11 have alpine summits that rise above the timberline.



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

Through continuing public education and advocacy for the protection of the Park's natural character, the Adirondack Council works to advise public and private policy makers on ways to safeguard this last remaining great expanse of open space.



ON THE COVER

Round Lake is part of The Nature Conservancy's purchase of 26,500 acres of property previously owned by the International Paper Company, some for eventual transfer to the state of New York. The land deal is the first result of a committee in which IP convened groups including the Adirondack Council and selected local officials to consider the future of certain lakes and ponds in the company's ownership. The Council stressed the importance of preserving IP's 16 ponds and lakes, and the plant and animal habitats in and around them.

Photo Credits: all photos by Gary Randorf and/or Adirondack Council staff unless otherwise noted.

The Adirondack Council

Founded in 1975, the Adirondack Council is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing the natural and human communities of the Adirondack Park through research, education, advocacy and legal action.

The Council receives moral and financial support from its more than 18,000 members and from private foundations. The Council's national and regional member organizations include the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Audubon of New York, National Parks and Conservation Association, Natural Resources Defense Council and The Wilderness Society, with a combined membership of more than 1.4 million people.

Adirondack Council memberships begin at \$25. Membership benefits include regular newsletters, special reports such as this one, action alerts and the opportunity to play an active role in protecting the Park's future.

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