

STATE OF THE PARK 2009



ADIRONDACK COUNCIL
Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness

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.

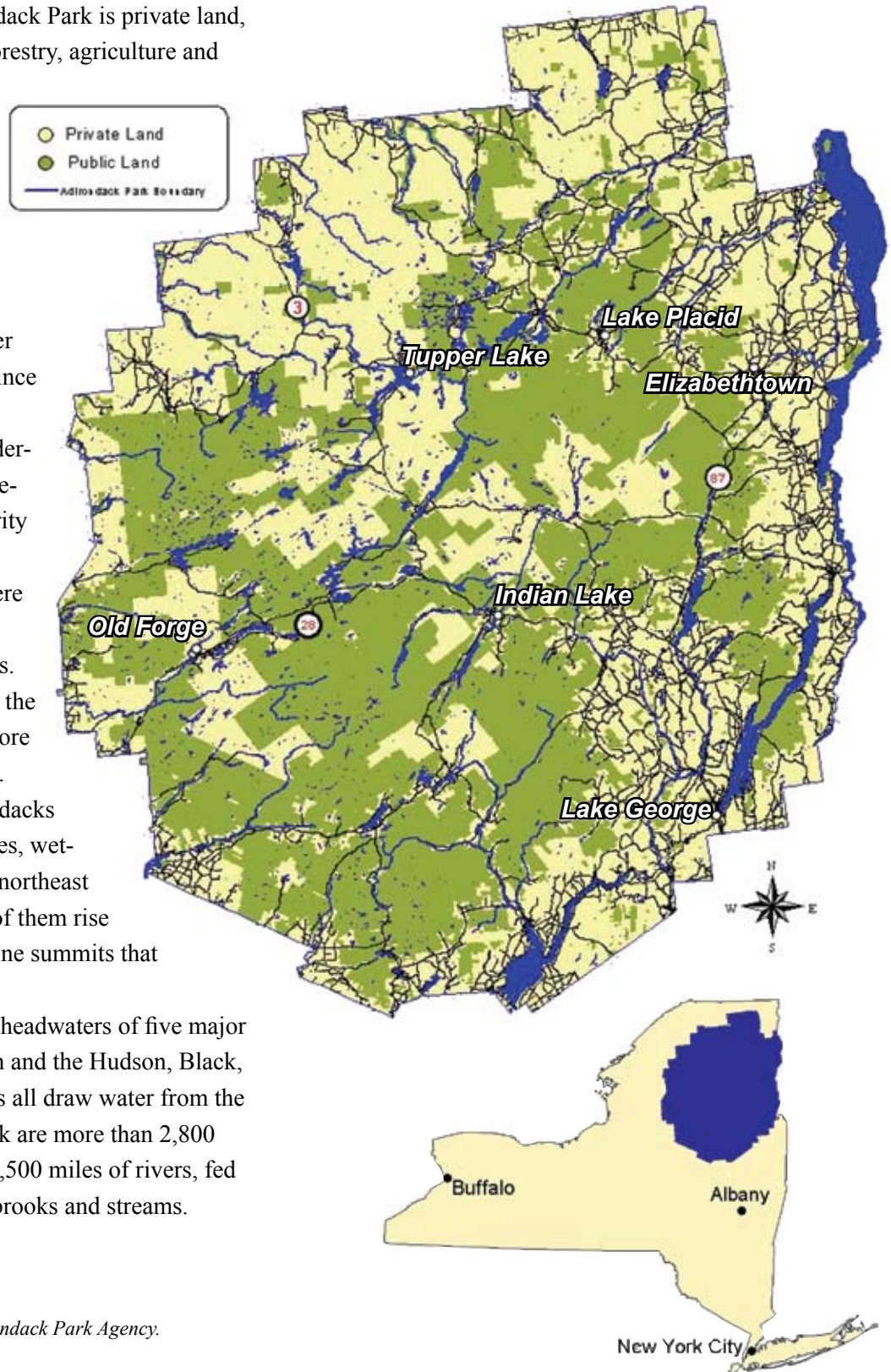
More than half of the Adirondack Park is private land, devoted principally to hamlets, forestry, agriculture and open-space recreation. The Park is home for 130,000 permanent and 110,000 seasonal residents, and hosts ten million visitors yearly.

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 public education and advocacy for the protection of the Park’s ecological integrity and wild character, the Adirondack Council advises public and private policy makers on ways to safeguard this last remaining great expanse of open space.



Map data provided by the Adirondack Park Agency.

STATE OF THE PARK 2009

A Non-Partisan Review of Elected and Appointed Government Officials' Actions Affecting the Adirondack Park

Written and Edited by Adirondack Council Program Staff

Designed and Illustrated by Sheri Amsel

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The mission of the Adirondack Council is to ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park. We envision an Adirondack Park composed of large core wilderness areas, connected to working farms and forests, and augmented by vibrant local communities, all within a diverse mosaic of biologically intact landscapes.



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State of the Park
2009



Dear Adirondack Council Members and Friends,

As in many parts of our nation and our world, we are living in challenging times in the Adirondacks. New York State's economy is in poor condition due to the nation-wide recession. The Adirondack Park Agency and the Department of Environmental Conservation are working with austerity budgets that will limit their planning, regulatory and enforcement capabilities over the lands and waters of the Adirondack Park.

We expect that the Environmental Protection Fund will again be targeted for raids to pay for current state operations. As a result, funds for open space acquisition, invasive species control and local smart growth planning are drying up. Presently, the NYS Division of Budget must explicitly approve any expenditure over \$500, and the state needs to carve another \$2.1 billion from this year's approved budget.

In this time of uncertainty, the Adirondack Council remains a strong, steady voice for environmental protection. Never has our consistent, visible presence in New York politics been more important. Over the past 12 months, the Adirondacks have experienced the election of a new President and the loss of our US Senator Hillary Clinton to his cabinet. Our newest Adirondack Congressional representative, Kirsten Gillibrand, was propelled into the US Senate through her appointment by Governor David Paterson. Gillibrand was replaced in the House by newly elected Scott Murphy of Queensbury. John McHugh, the Park's most senior House member was appointed by President Obama to become Secretary of the Army. As I write this, his confirmation is still a short time away and his replacement won't be known for months. New Adirondack Park Agency Chairman Curt Stiles began to make an impression in his first full year. This summer, the APA also gained a new Executive Director, Terry Martino, to handle day-to-day operations.

Even before 2009 started, Governor Paterson set off a firestorm of controversy with his first budget plan, by proposing to cap payments to Adirondack local governments that host state Forest Preserve. The Council led a coalition to defeat that plan. Meanwhile, Democrats took control of the NYS Senate for the first time in more than 40 years. Fierce leadership struggles in the Senate have led to the appointments of four different majority leaders since last May. Senate leadership remains in flux as we approach the 2010 elections, which will decide which party redraws the election district boundaries for the next 10 years.

Thanks to your support, the Adirondack Council has been – and will be – a constant force for conservation at a time when other organizations and agencies have been obligated to cut their budgets, reduce their programs, layoff staff or disappear entirely. With your continued help, we can overcome the challenges we face in this most tumultuous year, and lead the Park to a brighter 2010 and beyond.

Enjoy the autumn,

Brian L. Houseal Executive Director

On the Cover: Deer Pond and Lows Lake, looking east from inside the Five Ponds Wilderness Area. Lands around Lows Lake will be protected as Wilderness thanks to their recent reclassification. See section on Department of Environmental Conservation for additional details. Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

THE GOVERNOR

Reviving 80-by-50 is Nifty

In August, Governor Paterson signed an Executive Order setting a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in New York State by 80 percent below the levels emitted in 1990 by the year 2050. The Executive Order also creates the Climate Action Council with a directive to prepare a draft Climate



Paterson

Action Plan by September 30, 2010. His actions came after the Legislature failed to approve a bill setting a similar carbon-reduction goal.

Good Choice for APA Top Spot

In July, Governor David Paterson selected Terry D. Martino of Onchiota to be the Executive Director of the Adirondack Park Agency. Martino has worked for the Adirondack North Country Association, a regional sustainable development organization, for 23 years, first as Program Director and then Executive Director (1991). Mark Sengenberger and James Connolly had both served as Acting Director, doing an admirable job for the last two years, but neither was interested in keeping the position permanently.

A New Friend in the Senate

Governor Paterson appointed Adirondack Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand to the US Senate seat that was vacated when Sen. Hillary Clinton was appointed US Secretary of State by President Obama. Gillibrand also assumed Clinton's seat on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, where she has a say on legislation regarding climate change, acid rain and other issues affecting the Adirondacks.

Show Us the Money

Governor Paterson, along with his counterparts in New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine, recently requested \$30 million in funding for the newly created Northern Border Regional Commission. The Commission was part of the 2008 Farm Bill, but has yet to be funded. Money would help each state pay for environmentally sustainable economic growth, such as broadband communication and biomass energy generating facilities.

No Longer Bottled Up

In May, Governor Paterson signed an Executive Order calling for the phase out of bottled water, including water coolers, by state agencies. Instead, they will provide water from fountains and other dispensers. Water bottles are often discarded and use considerable energy to produce and transport.

Environmental Commitments Too Inconvenient

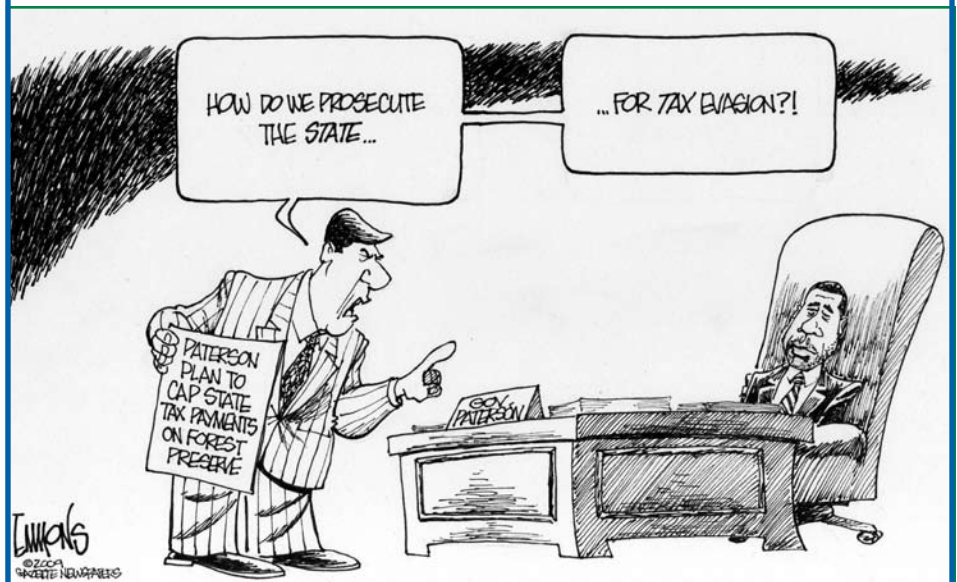
In November, the Governor and Legislature "borrowed" an additional \$50 million from the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) in a failed attempt to balance the state budget. The raid eliminated nearly all unspent funds that had been committed to environmental projects and redirected them to non-environmental uses. The raid brought the total of all raids on the EPF since 2002 to just under \$500 million.

Behind Curtain Number Two ...

It wasn't enough to simply raid the Environmental Protection Fund. Governor Paterson also tried to restructure the Fund so he could seize the bulk of the Real Estate

Cap on `Dacks Tax

Governor Paterson and his budget office outraged taxpayers and local officials statewide with a proposal that would have capped all of the state's property tax payments on public lands at the 2008 levels. This plan threatened the financial stability of dozens of Adirondack communities, whose municipal governments and schools depend on state tax payments for their survival. The NYS Legislature agreed to pay full property taxes on all Forest Preserve in 1886. The Governor's budget office pressed the plan despite the fact that the loss in revenues would severely undermine support for existing Forest Preserve lands as well as all future acquisitions.



Transfer Tax, the EPF's main source of revenue, for non-environmental purposes. Paterson proposed replacing the money with not-yet-collected revenue from the Bigger Better Bottle Bill, which had not been passed at that time. The Bottle Bill was later passed into law but is currently in litigation and no funds have been collected as of this writing.

 **FreeCreditsNoReport.com**

Shortly after New York joined nine other Northeastern states in establishing the rules for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), Governor Paterson announced he intended to break, or at least

bend, them. In response to complaints from the power industry lobby, he said he would give away additional carbon dioxide emissions allowances to some companies that have long-term contracts. New York's RGGI rules call for all power companies to buy almost all of the allowances they need to account for their emissions each year. The proceeds from the auction sales go to the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), which uses the money for energy conservation and clean power generation grants. Giving away more credits not only rewards the power companies, but limits the funds NYSEERDA has for green power projects.

 **Clean Water, Fresh Air Unprofitable**

In August, Governor Paterson issued an Executive Order creating a special panel of his staff to review state regulations to see which ought to be softened or eliminated based on what the business community considered onerous. The announcement included rules and regulations administered by the Department of Environmental Conservation, which oversees the Forest Preserve, conservation easements, wastewater discharges, stream crossings, the acid rain program and other pollution-control regulations inside the Adirondack Park.

STATE LEGISLATURE

Both Houses

 **Doffing the Governor's Cap**

In early April, Senate and Assembly leaders joined forces to defeat Gov. David Paterson's December 2008 budget proposal to cap all state property tax payments to communities that host taxable state lands, such as the Adirondack and Catskill Forest Preserves. This was a rare bi-partisan effort, led by Senators Darrel Aubertine, D-Cape Vincent, and Betty Little, R-Queensbury and Assemblymembers Kevin Cahill, D-Kingston, and Teresa Sayward, R-Willsboro.



Cahill



Sayward



Adirondack Council Director of Government Relations, Scott Lorey (2nd row, 1st from right) and Council Legislative Associate, Alanah Keddell (2nd row, 3rd from left) joined forces with other environmentalists in January to lobby for increased funding in the Environmental Protection Fund. Photo courtesy Dan Plumley/Protect the Adirondacks!

 **They Just Said No**

Both houses of the Legislature worked diligently to safeguard the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) in another difficult economic year. A proposal from Governor Paterson would have reduced the EPF to \$205 million. However, lawmakers were able to add an additional \$17 million; bringing the appropriation to \$222 million. In addition, the Legislature rejected the Governor's proposed \$45 million sweep of the EPF, the first rejection of a sweep in the history of the fund.

 **New Bottle Bill Uncorked**

The Legislature broke a 20-year logjam this spring when it agreed to expand the state's beverage container deposit law to single-serve water bottles. Unfortunately, the law was later set aside when bottlers and retailers sued in federal court over the implementation of NYS specific UPC codes. Thanks to a court decision in mid-August, many non-water bottle components of the law will go into effect immediately, with the water redemption to hopefully start by October.

Right Way on Waterways

Both houses this summer granted unanimous approval to two bills, one sponsored by Sen.

Betty Little and Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward, and the other by Sen. Joe Griffo, R-Rome, and Assemblywoman Deirdre Scozzafava, R-Gouverneur, designed to help three Adirondack communities qualify for economic development and community enhancement projects. The newly enrolled waters are Lake Placid and Mirror Lake in the Village of Lake Placid and Town of North

Elba, Essex County and the Little River in the Town of Franklin in Franklin County. The bills were signed by the Governor on August 11th. All three communities are now eligible for Waterfront Revitalization Grants through the NYS Department of State Coastal Resources Program.



Griffo



Scozzafava

winter. The second line would bring hydro power from Stark Falls Reservoir on the Raquette River, north of Tupper Lake. If approved by the voters on November 3, the amendment would allow a swap of six acres of Forest Preserve lands adjacent to the road for a larger tract of intact forest nearby, which would be added to the Forest Preserve after the vote. Look for Ballot Proposal One in this year's general election.

When the Chips are Down

Senator Darrel Aubertine, and Assemblywoman RoAnn Destito, D-Rome, intro-



Aubertine



Destito

Raiding the Cookie Jar Half a Billion Times

Both houses agreed with Governor Paterson in November 2008 to raid the remaining money from the Environmental Protection Fund, diverting an additional \$50 million to non-environmental spending. Such raids allow the Legislature to take public credit for approving much-needed, popular environmental programs, while later diverting that money to more expedient uses. In exchange, the Legislature has left behind a stack of nearly \$500 million IOUs.



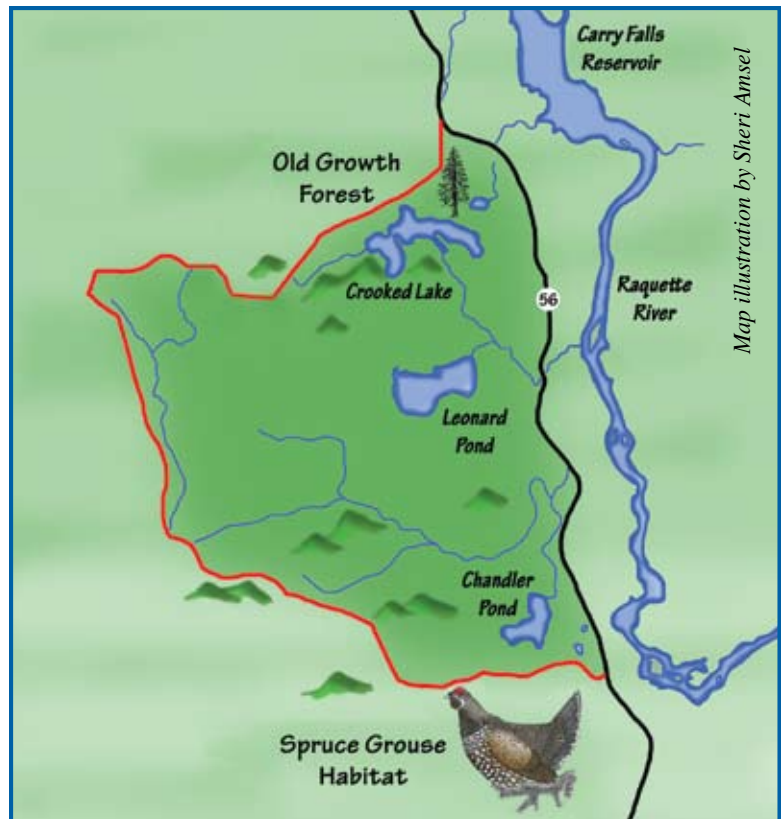
Watch for Amendment on Nov. 3 Ballot

Both houses, at the urging of sponsors Sen. Betty Little and Assemblyman Sweeney, agreed to put on this fall's ballot a Constitutional Amendment that would allow a land swap along State Route 56 in Colton so the NY Power Authority and National Grid can avoid an environmentally disastrous six-mile detour through the woods in bringing a new power line to Tupper Lake. The detour would involve road construction through an old-growth forest, 95 streams and wetlands, and habitat for the endangered spruce grouse. It would also erect a permanent barrier to expansion of that section of Forest Preserve. In contrast, the roadside of Route 56 contains no unique resources.



Little

Tupper has suffered for more than a decade with a single power supply line, which often fails in storms and in the



This proposed detour (red line) around a section of State Route 56 (black line) roadside in the Town of Colton could be avoided if the voters approve a Constitutional Amendment on Nov. 3. The amendment would authorize a land swap that removes a narrow corridor of roadside land from the Forest Preserve, where the power company's poles will be located. In exchange, the company would buy a wild forest parcel of equal or greater value and donate it to the Forest Preserve. Tupper Lake needs a more reliable power supply. Avoiding the detour will avoid extensive ecological harm to an otherwise healthy landscape of state and private forest east of Rt. 56.

Senate

Thompson's New Chair is a Good Fit

Newly appointed Senate Environmental Conservation Committee Chairman, Antoine Thompson, D-Buffalo, staved off proposed changes that would have weakened the Environmental Protection Fund. His efforts helped to secure an EPF with much higher funding for environmental capital projects than the Governor had proposed, including \$60 million set aside for new parks, open space and watershed protection.



Thompson

Kruger Assists with APA Makeover

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Carl Kruger, D-Brooklyn, introduced three bills at the request of the Adirondack Park Agency that would streamline its review process while providing incentives for affordable housing and for directing new development into already-developed areas and creating a funding mechanism for local planning.



Kruger

Putting Stock in a Bond

During the leadership breakdown in June, Sen. Thompson introduced a bill that would create a \$5 billion Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Bond Act. The bond act would have provided much-needed funding for parks, open space and watershed protection, and for clean energy, energy conservation and low/zero-emissions public transportation projects. The bill was not considered by the full Senate before the summer recess.

Will the Senate Please Come to Order

The 2009 session of the Senate came to a screeching halt in early June when two Democrats gave their support to the

Republican minority, creating a new set of leaders, according to their coalition. The ensuing power struggle resulted in numerous lawsuits, the unprecedented appointment of a new lieutenant governor, and the near-total abandonment of the Senate's legislative agenda.

Rocketing Down Wrong Trail

Sen. Aubertine introduced legislation that would have included vehicles as large as 1500 pounds in the legal definition of an all-terrain vehicle. Not only would this add to the dangers of allowing ATV riding on public lands, but would have added to the environmental destruction caused when heavier vehicles rip up trails, damage streams and wetlands, erode hillsides and cut new paths into off-limit areas.

Boulder in the Stream

Not one majority member of the Senate signed on to sponsor the Navigable Waterways Bill, which would codify the public right of passage on rivers that are navigable by boat, while also protecting landowners from liability for injuries or mishaps, and protecting private fisheries projects. The bill would have eliminated the need to test in court the public's right to use individual navigable rivers. At least one Senator campaigned on this issue, but was not willing to sponsor the bill.

Assembly

Sweeney Steps Up

Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee Chairman, Robert Sweeney, D-Lindenhurst, was able to convince his Assembly colleagues in a lean budget year to add an additional \$17 million to the paltry \$205 million Gov. Paterson had proposed to put into the Environmental Protection Fund. His efforts in the budget process also led to an expansion of the existing bottle bill to include water bottles.



Sweeney

This Land is Your Land...

Assemblyman Adam Bradley, D-Westchester, sponsored a bill that would drop the requirement that people must first prove how they would be personally harmed by the government's proposed action or inaction before they bring lawsuits compelling a government entity to protect the environment. This requirement places a great burden on the public. The bill passed the Assembly and several Senate committees, but was not approved by the full Senate before recess.



Bradley

Improved Climate

Assemblyman Sweeney's bill requiring DEC to mandate an 80-percent cut in greenhouse gases from all sources by 2050 passed the Assembly again this session. Sen. Thompson's version died in the Senate.

An Uncommon Bond

Near the end of the 2009 regular session, Assemblyman Sweeney introduced a bill that would have created a \$5 billion Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Bond Act. The bond act would have provided much-needed funding for parks, open space and watershed protection, and for clean energy, energy conservation and low/zero-emissions public transportation projects. The bill passed through Sweeney's committee, but did not make it out of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee before the June recess.

Thank You!

The Adirondack Council does not accept government or taxpayer funding of any kind. The Council's work is funded entirely by your private donations, strengthening our advocacy efforts.

Nay Word for Sayward Bills

Assembly leaders killed in committee a slew of poorly considered bills proposed by Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward. The bills would have allowed anyone to remove trees from the Forest Preserve; prevented state officials from closing roads in Wilderness Areas; allowed seasonal campgrounds to become permanent trailer parks without obeying building-density rules; and, imposed a short statute of limitations on land-use violations, preventing the Adirondack Park Agency from seeking a remedy.

Refraining from Reform

The Assembly failed to introduce the three reform bills proposed by the Adirondack Park Agency this session. While not perfect, these bills would have realigned the APA's permit review process, allowed for more affordable housing in the Park and created an application fee to assist communities with their future development.

APA Powerless on Power Plants

The Assembly's version of a bill governing the siting process for new electric power plants, commonly referred to as Article X, would strip the Adirondack Park Agency's authority in the regulatory process. Instead of allowing the APA to hold its own hearings on a project to be built within the Park, APA would only need to be notified of an application and could become a party to another body's hearing. The bill, sponsored by Energy Chair Kevin Cahill, passed the Assembly, but did not pass in the Senate.

COURTS

Judge Hits Brakes on ATV Suit

In November 2008, State Supreme Court Justice Eugene P. Devine ruled that Lewis County lacks both legal standing and capacity to challenge the state's decision in April 2008 to close truck trails to all-terrain vehicles. DEC closed all state forest and easement roads to ATV use, affecting 52 roads totaling 83.5 miles in Lewis, Jefferson and Oswego counties.

Taxing Issue

Last October, the State Appellate Court dismissed a challenge to the system of state payment of taxes on state-owned land. The Fourth Department in Rochester unanimously reversed the lower court decision in the Dillenburg case, which would have thrown out the entire system of tax payments by the state and start the process over again.

Not Hitting the Bottle

After several months of wrangling, US District Judge Deborah Batts lifted the injunction one of her colleagues put into place which had the entire bottle bill expansion on hold until April 2010. Now, key components, including unclaimed nickels going to the state and an increased handling fee are in effect. Also, companies have until October 22 to either comply with the deposit on water bottles or show that compliance is impossible.

Decade of Diligence

In May, US District Court Judge Larry McKinney ruled that Cinergy Corp. had violated the Clean Air Act and must shut down about 40 percent of its Terra Haute, IN plant. This case had been in litigation for 10 years and has ended with a victory for clean air as the judge found violations of the Act's New Source Review (NSR) requirement. NSR mandates companies to install modern pollution equipment at power plants when major upgrades take place. The order to shut down part of the plant by September accompanies a fine of nearly \$700,000.

Town Win Sinks Non-Boathouse

A controversial Canada Lake boathouse must be removed and its owner must pay a \$50,000 fine imposed as part of a July 2008 state Supreme Court decision, according to a unanimous decision in May by the Appellate Division of the NYS Supreme Court. The court upheld the decision of acting Supreme Court Judge Richard C. Giardino, who had found that a lakeside property owner deliberately circumvented Town of Caroga zoning codes. The homeowner obtained a permit to build a boathouse, but instead constructed a two-story home on the water's edge. The town has been fighting to have the structure removed since it was constructed in 1999. No appeal had been filed with the NYS Court of Appeals as of press time.

Just Kidding, We CAIR

After a controversial ruling last July, the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia reversed its ruling and temporarily reinstated EPA's clean air rule, until it could be revised. The Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) would reduce the ingredients that cause acid rain by 60 percent over the next decade. Now, both EPA and Congress are working on proposals to correct and enhance the previous rule.

Setbacks Advanced in Enforcement Case

In February, State Supreme Court Justice David Demarest upheld the Adirondack Park Agency's enforcement action against a homeowner who violated the shoreline setback regulations for the Park. The homeowners had filed an Article 78 petition in State Supreme Court seeking to void the APA's June 2008 Enforcement Committee determination. That ruling found the homeowner's contractor built a 100-foot long, tiered wall that contains a staircase in violation of shoreline setback regulations from Rainbow Lake in the Town of Franklin. Shoreline construction harms both water quality and wildlife habitat.



LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Common Ground, Uncommon Strength

Local officials and community leaders worked with the Adirondack Council and other environmental organizations through the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance to raise awareness of Governor Paterson's plan to cap all state property tax payments to local communities that host public lands. The victory has helped to solidify the Alliance as a venue for cooperation between often-competing interests on behalf of the people and natural resources of the Adirondack Park.

Inlet Limits Outflow

In March, the Town of Inlet imposed the Adirondack Park's first local law requiring the inspection of already-in-use septic systems when properties change hands. The requirement protects water quality and public health by ensuring that existing wastewater treatment systems aren't releasing pollution. By timing the inspections with home sales, buyers and sellers are able to incorporate the costs of repair or replacement into the financing of the home. It also gives the town an opportunity to remind buyers that expanding the size, or water use, of an older camp may require septic upgrades. The Adirondack Council supports the passage of statewide legislation incorporating these requirements.

Pass the Salt Alternatives

Last winter, both the Town of Ticonderoga and the Village of Lake George began using alternatives to road salt. Ticonderoga officials noted the lasting, positive effect of the product, as well as the reduction in traditional road salt use by nearly half.

Flush with Success

After six years of struggle, Essex Town Supervisor Ron Jackson succeeded in gaining federal funding to build a sewage treatment plant in this hamlet on the shore of Lake Champlain. Essex was the

last community on the New York side of the lake without a wastewater treatment system.

Try Another Spot

In December 2008, the Town of Wilmington Zoning Board of Appeals denied a variance to the builders of a proposed condominium project on the Ausable River that many residents felt would degrade the quality of the nearby town beach.

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes ...

Officials in the towns of Wilmington, Jay, Elizabethtown and Moriah, all in Essex County, took action in 2008 and 2009 to limit or ban the use of low-efficiency outdoor wood furnaces. Smoke and unburned flue gases from these devices can severely impair local air quality even when used only for burning wood. Many are used as yard waste and trash incinerators, adding to the problem.

Uphill Battle Worth Fighting

The Hamilton County Industrial Development Agency purchased at auction the Oak Mountain ski center and worked with residents and officials in Lake Pleasant and Speculator to keep it open. The county, town and village could have allowed the ski area to languish after private owners were unable to maintain it, but instead recognized it as a community asset that stimulates the winter economy.

The Wrong Way

In February, Lewis County legislators voted to create a county-wide ATV trail system, made up primarily of roads opened to ATV traffic with a few sections of county forest and private parcels in between. In March of 2007, the Adirondack Council sued and won a court case against the county for not conducting a full environmental review of this proposal. While a review was conducted, the Council does not believe the county adequately considered the potential for damage.



All-terrain vehicle riders have torn up this section of trail in the Aldrich Pond Wild Forest. ATVs are not allowed on Forest Preserve foot trails, but operators often ignore signs and physical barriers erected to keep them out. They cause erosion, wildlife habitat damage, air pollution and water pollution throughout the Adirondack Park.

Your Tax Dollars at Work

At a time when many local governments are struggling not to lay off employees or reduce services, nine Adirondack counties and 11 towns all agreed to put up three thousand dollars in order to start a lawsuit against the Adirondack Park Agency. APA's newly revised regulations included a variance requirement for major expansions of older homes within the APA's shoreline setback distance. The variance would help to protect water quality around heavily developed shorelines.



Needlessly Injured—Real Tragedy

The Lewis County Legislature once again opened its public roads to all-terrain vehicle riders for a one-day rally, without assessing the potential costs to the environment and people. The rally resulted in widespread trail and stream-bank erosion, at least one rider's death and one serious injury.

Keep in Touch!

Sign up for e-mail updates on our website:
www.AdirondackCouncil.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Don't Do It, but Don't Blame Us

After years of negotiations, Long Lake officials are trying to blame the stalled progress on Township 40 land settlements on environmental groups "holding guns to their heads" by requiring an APA-approved land-use plan and a building moratorium prior to the Constitutional Amendment passing. No talks have taken place in over a year and the biggest hurdle remaining is what land would be exchanged for clear title to the contested properties. The Adirondack Council supported the legislation in 2008 to begin the amendment process and is not aware of any ultimatum requiring a land-use plan or building moratorium to be implemented.

ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY

Standing Tough on the Shoreline

The APA withstood withering criticism from developers and real estate interests this spring when it used its rule-making authority to eliminate a loophole that had allowed uncontrolled shoreline development. Prior to this, no permit was needed for a homeowner to expand the size of a home built before the APA's creation in 1973, even when that home was already closer to the water than current laws allow. Under the revised rule, the APA must grant a variance before such a structure can be expanded.

Let's Get Serious

In June, APA Administrative Law Judge Daniel O'Connell told Adirondack Club and Resort developer Michael Foxman to stop stalling the review of his 700-unit mega-resort and begin the formal adjudicatory hearing. The ruling came after Foxman failed to make significant progress during the last 12 months of sporadic pre-hearing, non-binding mediation sessions with the agency and various interested parties.



In July, Governor David Paterson selected Terry D. Martino of Onchiota to be the Executive Director of the Adirondack Park Agency. Martino has worked for the Adirondack North Country Association, a regional sustainable development organization, for 23 years, first as Program Director and then Executive Director.



Boost for the Bob

In July, the APA held hearings on its plan to reclassify 12,000 acres of state Forest Preserve near Lows Lake and the Round Lake Wilderness from Primitive Areas to Wilderness. The move will add significantly to the Wilderness lands already preserved in and near the Adirondack Council's proposed 408,000-acre Bob Marshall Great Wilderness.

Pictures Worth a Thousand Words

For the last year, APA staff have photographed the shorelines of 30 water bodies in an effort to create a modern database of existing structures and conditions. It has already been used to both open and dismiss enforcement investigations.

Lobbying for Reform

Chairman Curt Stiles pressed the NYS Legislature to approve three bills that would simplify the agency's review process, while encouraging local planning, providing incentives for affordable housing and for directing new development into already-developed areas. The Adirondack Council will urge the APA to improve these bills and work with all interested parties to gain support in the Legislature next year.

A Gust of Progress

In September, the APA approved a "general permit" for the construction of small, non-commercial wind power turbines at homes, farms and businesses in the Park. General permits allow expedited approval when applicants meet the standards that the agency would normally impose regarding visibility and potential for environmental harm.

Hear Ye, Hear Ye

In an effort to make the APA more approachable and transparent to local officials, Chairman Stiles has made himself available to town and county officials, accepting invitations to appear at numerous meetings and public events. He recently attended a meeting of the Essex County Ways and Means Committee and is offering a monthly forum to local officials who want to come to the agency and present their towns' needs.



Stiles

'Atta Boy' for Alliance

In May, the Park Agency publicly lauded the Common Ground Alliance for its work in stopping Gov. Paterson's plan to cap state property tax payments to local governments that host state lands. The Alliance is a group of local officials, community leaders and environmental organi-

zations that meets each summer to plan a Park-wide agenda for political and social action on issues of common concern. The Adirondack Council is a founder and core team member.

Frankenpine Strikes Again

The APA imposed yet another mini-Frankenpine on the Park's landscape this summer when it insisted that the last few feet of a cell tower on the Paul Smith's College campus be covered in fake pine branches. The result is an object that looks neither like a tree nor a cell tower, and calls attention to itself rather than concealing the equipment behind it. In already developed areas, a neutral background color would do more to minimize the visibility of the tower than does covering it in plastic needles.

Passing the Buck

In December 2008, the APA Board of Commissioners unanimously agreed to

delegate to staff the approval of some telecommunications towers. The Commissioners themselves seem confused on what is or is not "substantially invisible." While Agency staff does a fine job, they are now charged by the Commissioners with making that decision in many cases. Luckily, this is only a one-year experiment to be revisited soon.

Fire in the Hole! Ho Hum ...

APA staff should have been more sensitive to the concerns of the residents of Ephrata when it declined to require a formal public hearing on a mining proposal that was later approved by the Board of Commissioners. Residents were justly concerned that the quality of life in the hamlet of Rockwood would be degraded by the noise, dust and traffic from the mine. They, along with the Adirondack Council, had called for a hearing on this controversial project. But our requests fell upon deaf ears.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Historic Peak Preserved

Last November, the DEC purchased Lyon Mountain in Clinton County, the site that once hosted Verplanck Colvin's headquarters in 1879 during his survey of the Adirondacks. It is now a popular hiking and skiing destination. The department used money from the Environmental Protection Fund to purchase about 20,000 acres of Nature Conservancy land in the deal. In December of 2008, the state also purchased a conservation easement on 84,000 acres of adjacent timberlands owned by Lyme Timber of New Hampshire.

Get it Here

After extending for a year its emergency rules banning the transportation of firewood more than 50 miles, the DEC this spring made the ban permanent. The ban is an effort to control the spread of invasive forest pests into unaffected

areas. Non-native insects and diseases can be spread easily through the transport of downed trees. DEC should next move to inspect Canadian trucks hauling lumber through the Adirondacks from points south and ban entirely the transport of firewood into the Adirondack and Catskill Parks.

LEEDing the Way

DEC's Warrensburg regional office became the first building in the Adirondack Park to be given a Gold rating by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system as part of the US Green Building Council. Renovated in 2005, the building now has triple-glazed windows, extra insulation in the walls and roof, and 100 percent storm-water retention onsite.



Grannis

Don't Roll Out the Barrel

In September the Department of Environmental Conservation finalized its proposal to ban the use of backyard burn barrels to incinerate any materials other than wood. This strengthened regulation would extend the existing ban on burn barrels in towns with more than 20,000 residents, but allow for restricted burnings of brush piles in less populated towns. The regulation would also allow for campfires and celebratory bonfires utilizing untreated, uncoated wood only. Emissions from garbage burned in one burn-barrel can be worse than living downwind of a municipal trash incinerator.



Carbon Count Required

In August, a new DEC policy took effect that requires that greenhouse gas emissions be included in state environmental reviews of large-scale projects. The policy provides guidance to DEC staff for considering greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency when conducting environmental studies under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).

Think it Over

In June, DEC staff sought clarification of a poor decision by Commissioner Pete Grannis, after he ruled that the towns had never formally abandoned an old road between Keene and Lake Placid (North Elba), better known as the Jackrabbit Trail through the Sentinel Range Wilderness. The decision gave control of the road back to the towns, whose officials could decide to open it to motorized traffic. DEC staff members believe the Commissioner made his decision based on incorrect advice and information and want him to reconsider it. The Adirondack Council and the APA have filed separate motions to intervene and clarify, supporting the staff's efforts.

Marshalling New Wilderness

The DEC has proposed to the Adirondack Park Agency the reclassification of 12,000 acres of Forest Preserve from Primitive to Wilderness in the area from Lows Lake to the Round Lake Wilderness. The lands will make fine additions to the Adirondack Council's proposed 408,000-acre Bob Marshall Great Wilderness. (See *A Gift of Wildness* at www.AdirondackCouncil.org/bobmarshall2.pdf.)

Habitat on Radar Screen

The DEC issued guidelines for measuring potential bird and bat deaths during and after the construction of commercial wind turbines throughout the state. The rules include on-the-ground surveys of habitat and the use of radar to track bird and bat populations prior to permit approval. The guidelines will help officials and the public decide where turbines should not be allowed. No such guidelines existed when the 400-foot-tall commercial turbines were constructed just west of the Adirondack

Park on Tug Hill and just north of the Park around Ellenburg.

Fair Warning

This spring, the DEC advised the Hudson River/Black River Regulating District that it must recognize the status of the lands immediately surrounding the Great Sacandaga Lake as constitutionally protected Forest Preserve. The DEC told the District to stop treating the lands as though they were the private holdings of the upland owners. The comments came as part of the DEC's review of the District's revised rules and regulations for upland owners who hold permits for shoreline access. The District dropped its multi-year attempt to revise its rules, blaming DEC for changing the status of the lands, which created strong opposition from private property owners.

DEC Snaps Poaching Ring

In March, the DEC's undercover investigation into poaching and illegal sales of New York's native turtles, snakes and salamanders led to the state bringing charges against 18 people. Six more suspects were charged by Pennsylvania officials and one more under Canadian law. The investigation also prompted the US Fish and Wildlife Service to pursue federal charges against a Maryland meat processor for buying hundreds of illegally trapped New York snapping turtles, and against a Louisiana turtle farm operator for buying thousands of New York snapping turtle hatchlings for export to Asia.

Ruling Throttles Jackrabbit

In May, Commissioner Grannis ruled that the Jackrabbit Trail between Keene and Lake Placid was never formally abandoned by its host towns when the state took possession of it decades ago. In the ruling, Grannis relied upon bad advice and incorrect information. His own regional staff has filed a formal request for a "clarification" of the decision, hoping to avoid opening this road to motorized traffic or setting a precedent for other roads on the Forest Preserve. The Adirondack Council has sought to intervene in the case, supporting the staff's efforts.

Oh, That Salt Pile?

Regional DEC officials waited too long to respond to repeated complaints concerning the Village of Saranac Lake's uncovered municipal road salt pile. State officials did nothing to correct the problem until after the Adirondack Council filed a notice of intent to sue the village under the federal Clean Water Act in an attempt to protect Lake Colby and Colby Brook from further contamination. The Lake Colby Association has been presenting credible evidence of chloride contamination since 2003. Chloride can harm aquatic plants, other wildlife and human health. Lake Colby hosts the village beach, a DEC youth camp and DEC-run state fishing access site.

It's on My Desk Somewhere ...

Another year has passed without a formal all-terrain vehicle policy for state lands. The DEC proposed a draft plan, which banned ATVs from the Adirondack Forest Preserve and most public lands statewide with limited exception for permitted use by people with disabilities. But that plan was proposed in 2005 by Commissioner Erin Crotty during the Pataki administration and after public hearings and comments, was never finalized. The public and law enforcement officials deserve clear, enforceable rules for ATVs.

Take Our Word for It

The DEC has yet to produce a map of its "official count" of snowmobile trail mileage inside the Adirondack Forest Preserve. The Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan limits snowmobile trail mileage to 848 miles on state lands. Several state agency estimates in the 1980s and 1990s showed 1,200 miles or more already constructed. However, DEC now claims the total Forest Preserve mileage is only 750. The new figure appears to be an attempt to avoid DEC's duty to close unused and dead-end trails as new trails are opened. DEC has Geographic Information System resources capable of measuring total trail mileage within a few feet.



OTHER AGENCIES

Fix One, Forget Other

The NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) made a series of reasonable recommendations last fall for the improvement of traffic patterns on US Route 11, which connects Watertown and Plattsburgh, just north of the Adirondack Park. The plan is preferable to the proposed construction of an interstate highway adjacent to Route 11, which would bar the free travel of wildlife between the Adirondack Park and Canada via the St. Lawrence Valley and southern Quebec. The proposed interstate would also negatively impact the economies of local communities, as happened along Route 9 when Interstate 87, "The Northway," was opened.

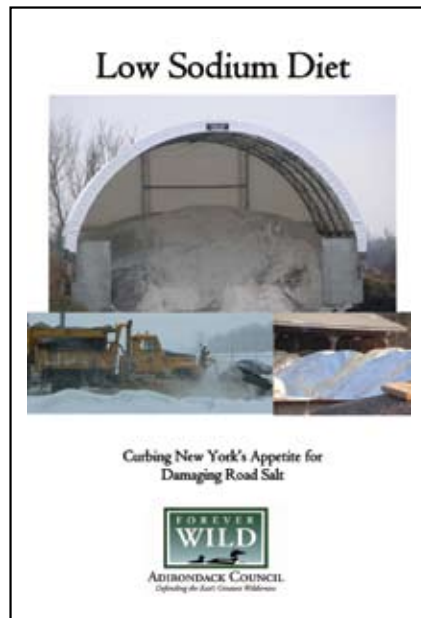
Green for Green Power

In July, the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) won \$123 million in federally funded stimulus grants to pay for energy conservation and clean power development across New York.

A Pinch of Progress

The DOT continues to use alternatives to road salt on a steep, narrow, winding section of NYS Route 73 east of Lake Placid known as Cascade Pass. Road salt has severely impaired water quality in Upper and Lower Cascade lakes. In February, the Adirondack Council released *Low Sodium Diet: Curbing New York's Appetite for Damaging Road Salt* (www.AdirondackCouncil.org/reports3.html) which outlined a series of recommendations for DOT and local officials regarding road

salt. In response, DOT officials said they would consider the report and believe they are making progress on viable alternatives statewide via the Cascade project.



Copies of the Council's new report "Low Sodium Diet: Curbing New York's Appetite for Road Salt" are available online at www.AdirondackCouncil.org.

Skull & Crossbones

The DOT continues to use poison to control weeds on the tracks of the 122-mile-long Adirondack Rail Road, which passes through some of the most pristine and sensitive areas of the Adirondack Forest Preserve. It also passes water bodies that host endangered species. Chemical herbicides often harm non-target species and should be a last-resort, only for invasive species control, inside the Adirondack Park.

We Give Up

The Hudson River/Black River Regulating District so badly botched its multi-year effort to redraw its rules for shoreline access permits to the Great Sacandaga Lake, the Governor's office had to call a halt to the process. The district blamed Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) officials for interfering when DEC pointed out that the shoreline of the reservoir is Forest Preserve and must be managed as such. The district's lack of public accountability and ineffective enforcement has resulted in widespread land-use violations on the shore and confusion as to the shoreline's status.

THANK YOU to all our members for your activism and financial and moral support. Your involvement really does make a difference. Thank you for your continued support!



GIVE AT THE OFFICE!

Take advantage of an easy and convenient way to support the Adirondack Council! You can make a gift to the Adirondack Council by payroll contributions through Earth Share New York's workplace giving program at numerous private companies, many state and municipal government organizations, and in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), by selecting #22101 on your pledge form. Contributions to Earth Share New York support a broad range of charities committed to protecting public health and our air, land, water and wildlife. The Adirondack Council is a member of Earth Share New York, a statewide federation of our state and this country's most respected environmental and conservation charities. To find out more about how you and your workplace can support the Adirondack Council through an Earth Share of New York charitable giving campaign, please call Diane Fish, Director of Fund Development at 518-873-2240. You can also visit Earth Share New York's website at: www.earthshareny.org.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Gillibrand Pioneers Carbon Retirement

In December 2008, then-New York State Representative Kirsten Gillibrand became the first American to permanently retire carbon dioxide pollution allowances from a government-mandated U.S. carbon dioxide reduction program. She did it through the *Cool Park/Healthy Planet* program created by the Adirondack Council to prevent thousands of tons of carbon dioxide from being emitted by power plants from Maine to Delaware. The Council purchased the allowances at the auction mandated by the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).



Gillibrand

Power Plant Emissions Rules Back in Service

In July, US Environmental Protection Agency Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation, Gina McCarthy, told the US Senate that the EPA was working to issue replacement rules for the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) by 2011. CAIR would have required deep cuts in power plant emissions of soot and smog from the 29 states east of the Rocky Mountains and the District of Columbia. The agency is also moving forward on a replacement rule for the Clean Air Mercury Rule.

The CAIR was vacated by a federal court late in 2008, then reinstated by that same court, when it realized that the power plant-owning plaintiffs wanted the rule merely adjusted, not eliminated. The court said the old rules could remain in effect while EPA tried again. The Mercury Rule had been vacated by the same federal court earlier, siding with the Natural Resources Defense Council et al, who felt it was dangerously lax.

Acid Rain on White House Agenda

Two important acid rain monitoring programs remain whole in President

Barack Obama's budget, as outlined in early May. These programs have been used for the last 20 years to determine if clean air laws and regulations are having their intended effect. The Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNET) will receive \$3.95 million to operate a series of air monitoring stations that measure pollution falling from the sky; and the Temporally Integrated Monitoring of Ecosystems and the Long Term Monitoring Program (TIME/LTM) is expected to be funded at \$720,000.

This program measures lake and river chemistry (acidity, mercury content, etc.) along the East Coast, including Adirondack water bodies. Adirondack Congressman John McHugh, R-Pierrepont Manor, and his Adirondack colleague Michael Arcuri, D-Utica, had requested that House leadership maintain the current funding levels for these programs. McHugh and Arcuri, along with Senator Chuck Schumer, were able to convince their colleagues to restore the funding during previous budget negotiations.

Passing the Acid Test

As the Waxman/Markey climate change bill was being considered by the House of Representatives in late June, Congressman McHugh was considered a moderate voice

In June, Congressman John McHugh was nominated by President Barack Obama to serve as Secretary of the Army. McHugh was confirmed by the US Senate on September 16. Governor Paterson must call a special election to fill his vacant seat.



Arcuri



Schumer

and swing vote needed in order to pass the bill. In the final hours before the vote, McHugh agreed to vote for the bill, but only if the bill also required EPA to report within five years whether the measures taken to control greenhouse gases were effective at controlling acid rain too.

Buffering Agent

In March, US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand succeeded in amending the federal budget to include a \$764,000 grant for the transformation of the Gaslight Village, a defunct amusement park, into a wetland. The transformation will turn the area into a wetland buffer protecting Lake George from storm-water runoff that carries silt, sand, road salt and petroleum products into the lake's south basin.

Wants More than CAIR

In April, Congressman McHugh introduced the Acid Rain and Mercury Control Act, which would limit emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and mercury from coal-fired power plants. The Adirondack Council enthusiastically supports this bill. The legislation would require a 75 percent cut in sulfur and nitrogen emissions from power plants (based on 1997 levels) by 2012 and a 90 percent reduction in mercury emissions (from current levels) by 2013. The cuts are more aggressive than those required by the current CAIR.

Green to Keep Water Clean

In April, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson visited Albany to announce that she was delivering \$432 million, its largest grant ever to a state, for rebuilding local sewage systems that pollute rivers and lakes. The money came from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (stimulus funding) and will go into the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund, which provides grants to local governments for sewage treatment facilities and other clean water infrastructure. The loan fund currently contains applications for projects totaling \$4.5 billion.

ATTORNEY GENERAL



Victory for Cleaner Air

As the leader of an 18-state coalition of attorneys general, Attorney General Andrew Cuomo won a lawsuit proving that the Bush administration's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) illegally issued weak pollution standards for soot and fine particles from electric power plants. In November 2008, the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit found EPA further erred by not taking into account the fact that children, the elderly and other vulnerable populations have a special sensitivity to air pollution. The court's decision sent the standards back to the EPA, now under the new Obama administration, charging the agency to issue stronger, more protective air pollution standards for fine soot.



Cuomo



No More Pressure

In October 2008, Attorney General Cuomo issued a set of guidelines to wind power companies and municipal officials. This was after an investigation in Franklin County where wind companies are alleged to have illegally influenced local officials to get permission to build wind towers. Cuomo's Wind Industry Ethics Code would bar wind companies from hiring municipal officials or their relatives. Firms could not give gifts of more than \$10 during a one-year period or any other compensation contingent upon government action. In July 2009, 15 more companies, making up the remainder of major wind developers in the state, also signed onto the ethics code.



A Shovel for Those Buried in Tax Bills

Attorney General Cuomo proposed a bill which passed the Legislature, allowing taxpayers to petition to consolidate local governments and special taxing districts. The act won't eliminate any of the Park's

92 towns or 11 villages. But it would make it easier for local governments and taxpayers to consolidate towns, villages and special districts that provide water, sewer, garbage collection, library and other services. Cutting wasteful duplications of services and reducing local property taxes are the goals of this new law.



Solid Effort

The Attorney General's office did its best with a weak case in defending the Adirondack Park Agency's authority over three houses built without permits on a farm in Essex County. Technical errors made by the APA during its enforcement action effectively prevented a successful defense of the agency's jurisdiction. The APA had sought to reaffirm its role in reviewing the location of permanent workforce housing on farms, especially when those homes are built near state-designated Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers, as they were in this case. Instead, the court declared the APA had no jurisdiction over farm housing.

TIP OF THE HAT

Each year in State of the Park, the Adirondack Council recognizes the positive efforts other not-for-profit organizations, groups, individuals and companies have brought to the Park's environment and sustainable economy over the past 12 months. We offer a tip of our collective hats to:

In April, the US EPA granted its highest honors to the **Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP)**. Founded in 1998 by the Adirondack Nature Conservancy, APIPP is leading the effort to protect Adirondack natural resources from the damaging effects of invasive species. APIPP succeeds by engaging volunteers and partners and by creating a coordinated, strategic, and integrated regional approach.

Last September, the **Adirondack Nature Conservancy** purchased the Follensby Pond property from longtime owner John McCormick. The 14,600-acre property contains one of the largest privately owned lakes in the northeast and was the location of Ralph Waldo Emerson's Philosophers' Camp as well as the state's bald eagle reintroduction program in the 1980s.

In May, the **Lake George Waterkeeper, Chris Navitsky** won a lawsuit against the town of Lake George overturning the approval of the potentially damaging Forest Ridge subdivision. The decision follows a June 2008 decision in which Warren

County State Supreme Court Judge David Krogman suspended approval of the subdivision. The Waterkeeper was able to prove that the town had not considered state and local environmental laws when approving the subdivision about three miles north of Lake George Village.

Clarkson University's new Adirondack Initiative seeks to promote the region as a place for white-collar professionals to conduct business, using the Internet to telecommute. In June, the initiative opened "work stations" in Blue Mountain Lake, Lake Placid, Saranac Lake and Long Lake with free internet access available for anyone looking to conduct business or develop an enterprise.

The **Great Sacandaga Lake Advisory Council**, the **Darrin Fresh Water Institute at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute** and **Paul Smith's College** have joined forces to halt the spread of spiny water fleas and other invasive species at Great Sacandaga Lake and other major water bodies in the Park this summer.

ECOLOGY UPDATE

Pests and Pathogens

In June of this year, the emerald ash borer was discovered near Jamestown, in western New York. This metallic green beetle was accidentally introduced to the U.S. from Asia in 2002, and has already killed millions of ash trees in the Midwest. Several species of ash trees (genus *Fraxinus*) are found in Adirondack forests and wetlands, and are common street trees throughout the state. It is just a matter of time before the borer arrives in the Park. If experience in the Midwest is any guide, we can expect most of our ash trees to die within the next two decades.

The emerald ash borer is just one of a long litany of pests and pathogens that have swept through Eastern forests over the past 100 years. To date, the most significant impact on Adirondack forests has been from beech bark disease, which was introduced to Nova Scotia over 100 years ago. Within the past 25 years, the disease has blanketed the Park. The impact has been particularly severe in the Park's signature old growth forests, where massive beech trees once dominated, but have been replaced by thickets of young beech sprouts.

The exotic insects and diseases that threaten our forests arrive in the U.S. via two main routes: on live plants imported for the nursery trade, and on wood used in pallets and shipping materials. Our first line of defense is clearly to try to limit their introduction. The federal government has increased inspections at ports of entry, but the pace of introductions is accelerating nonetheless. Within the Park, programs like the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) play a crucial role in

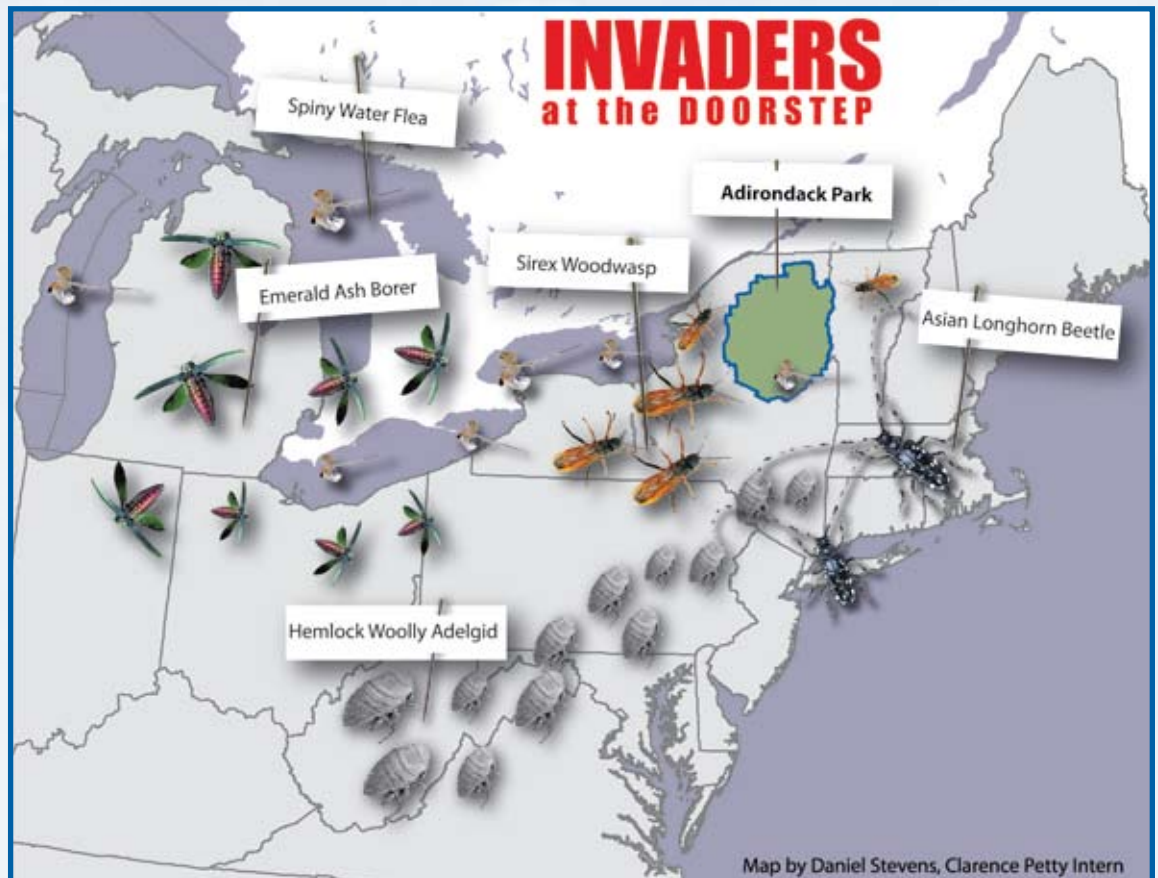
recruiting the public as sentinels to spot new introductions. Equally important is the recent Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) ban on movement of firewood within the state.

Once a pest or pathogen arrives in the Park our options become much more problematic. The traditional response is to attempt eradication by removing all potential host trees around an infestation. That option would clearly violate the "Forever Wild" protections on Forest Preserve lands. This issue is probably moot in the case of the emerald ash borer. After several years of efforts in the Midwest, the consensus now is that cutting down tens of thousands of ash trees had no hope of eradicating the insect. Less clear is whether the valiant but ultimately futile efforts of our neighbors to the west may have slowed the spread of the insect, giving scientists more time to find other means to save our ash trees. There has been some notable success at eradicating

outbreaks of Asian long-horned beetles in and around New York City, but a recent outbreak of that insect in Worcester, Massachusetts raises the prospect that this even more destructive insect may now appear throughout the Northeast.

Many scientists believe that the problem will only be compounded as a result of climate change. Cold winter temperatures appear to limit the northward spread of insects like the hemlock wooly adelgid. This introduced insect has devastated hemlock forests from southern New England to Virginia, but is spreading north toward the Park only very slowly.

*Dr. Charles D. Canham, Senior Scientist
Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies and
Adirondack Council Conservation
Committee Chair.*



2009 AWARD WINNERS

CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

Adirondack Nature Conservancy

In July, the Adirondack Council named the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy as “Conservationist of the Year” for 2009, during a ceremony at The Woods Inn in the Town of Inlet. The award was presented at the Adirondack Council’s annual Forever Wild Day celebration. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the award.

The Conservancy’s biggest feat of conservation was the purchase of the entire holdings of Finch, Prun & Co., which owned 161,000 acres of the Adirondack Park, including the Hudson River Gorge, Blue Ledges, Boreas Ponds, the Essex Chain of Lakes and OK Slip Falls, among the Park’s highest cascading flows.

The Conservancy spent \$110 million and climbed way out on a financial limb to make this happen. This purchase took vision to see just how important these lands are to the future of the Park, and it took real courage to take such risk for an opportunity that will not come again in our lifetimes.

More than 570,000 acres of important Adirondack forests, waters and wildlife habitat have been protected from fragmentation and development through the Adirondack Nature Conservancy’s efforts. If these lands had been sold to land speculators and developers, the Park’s backcountry would be fragmented beyond recognition.



L to R: Brian Ruder, Adirondack Council Board Chair, Michael Carr, Executive Director of the Adirondack Nature Conservancy, Meredith Prime, ANC Board Chair, and Council Executive Director Brian Houseal.

Read remarks and view photos on our website at www.AdirondackCouncil.org.

Thompson, Sweeney Co-Legislators of the Year

In May, the Adirondack Council presented its “Legislator of the Year” award to the Environmental Conservation Committee Chairmen in both houses, honoring Senator Antoine Thompson of Buffalo and Assemblyman Robert Sweeney of Lindenhurst, Suffolk County. The awards were presented at a meeting of the Council’s Board of Directors at the Empire State Plaza.

Assemblyman Sweeney and Senator Thompson stood between the Adirondack Park and potential disaster this year, protecting the Park from serious harm as the state struggled to find a way to close a large budget gap. Despite enormous pressure, they rejected a plan to weaken the basic structure of the Environmental Protection Fund. At the same time, they took a new step in updating New York’s existing bottle deposit law.



Thompson



Sweeney

As a result of their hard work, the EPF continues to have solid funding behind it. The EPF’s funding is significantly higher than what was proposed by the Governor and contained no built-in raids of the fund balance. The EPF provides funding for more than a dozen specific types of capital projects that enhance both the environment and the economy, including \$60 million for land acquisition.

Council Honors Gary Randorf

At the Split Rock Lighthouse in Essex (www.AdirondackDreams.com) on August 6th, the Adirondack Council and friends joined host Gary Heurich and Chris Maron of the Champlain Area Trails (CATS) to recognize Gary Randorf, founding Executive Director of the Adirondack Council. Gary was celebrated for his conservation achievements in the Champlain Valley and throughout the Adirondack Park. A section of the CATS trail will be named the Randorf Ramble in Gary’s honor.



L to R: Brian Ruder, Council Board Chair, Brian Houseal, Council Executive Director, Gary Randorf, Chris Maron and Gary Heurich.

COOL COMMUTE

In response to 350.org's call to action for the International Day of Climate Action on October 24th the Adirondack Council is planning and promoting -- COOL COMMUTE. We're looking for 350 (or more!) people who will commit to an alternative commute to work or school (or any travel) for one day during the week prior to and including October 24th. If you drive alone, find a friend to commute with you. Can you bike, walk or use public transportation? Encourage family members and friends to participate! Sign up on the Council's website -

http://www.AdirondackCouncil.org/Form_350.html

Download the 350 logo and then be sure to send us a photo so we can help 350.org document the widespread interest in climate action. You can learn more about the International Day of Climate Action at www.350.org.



REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



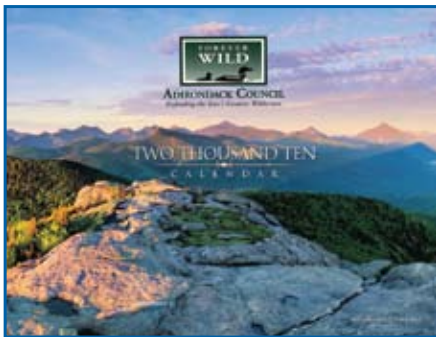
Purchase a Carbon Reduction Certificate through our *Cool Park/Healthy Planet* program and we will permanently retire THREE TONS of carbon dioxide from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Funds generated by the Council's *Cool Park/Healthy Planet* program are used for education, advocacy and additional credit purchases. (A \$25 contribution retires three tons.) To learn more go to our website <http://www.Adirondack-Council.org/CoolParkHealthyPlanet.html>.

The Adirondack Council offers a small collection of products to help raise the funds needed to advocate for the Adirondack Park every day. You can place an order by calling **1.877.873.2240 (toll-free)** or order online at www.AdirondackCouncil.org

Proceeds from sales benefit Adirondack Park conservation.

Additional items are available on our website.

ADIRONDACK COUNCIL 2010 FOREVER WILD CALENDAR



Featuring the Adirondack landscape photography of Carl Heilman II, the Adirondack Council's 2010 calendar brings you into the Park with Carl's breathtaking images. \$13

ADIRONDACK PARK MAP WITH WATERCOLOR ILLUSTRATIONS

The Adirondack Council has published the 2nd Edition of its popular Adirondack Park map (35" x 43") showing public and private lands, wilderness areas, mountains, rivers, towns and highways. The map is bordered by beautiful, detailed watercolor illustrations by artist Anne Lacy depicting various habitat found in the Adirondacks: alpine meadow, river valley, marsh, bog, river, brook, hardwood forest, lake and boreal forest. Laminated map: \$40 Unlaminated map: \$25





ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

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Adirondack Council

The Adirondack Park is the largest park in the contiguous United States. Its wild, natural beauty is a sanctuary for wildlife and people in today's world. The Adirondack Council is the leading voice for Adirondack conservation. We are showing the world how people and nature can thrive together.

Not a member yet? Join us! Adirondack Council memberships begin at \$35. Membership benefits include regular newsletters, special reports on important topics of the day, action alerts and the opportunity to play an active role in protecting the Park's natural resources and scenic beauty.

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Where to Find Us

Main Office	Albany Office
P.O. Box D-2	342 Hamilton Street
103 Hand Ave., Suite 3	First Floor
Elizabethtown, NY 12932	Albany, NY 12210
518.873.2240	518.432.1770
877.873.2240 toll-free	800.842.PARK toll-free

www.AdirondackCouncil.org
info@adirondackcouncil.org



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