

**LAND SWAP APPROVED TO CARRY OUT CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT  
APPROVED BY VOTERS IN 2009 TO ASSIST VILLAGE OF TUPPER LAKE**  
*Environmental Organization Helped Work Out Details, Promoted Amendment with Voters*

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ALBANY, N.Y. – The NYS Senate gave final approval today to a bill that will carry out the land swap authorized by a Constitutional Amendment that was approved by the voters of the state in the 2009 general election.

“This is the final step in a process that brought a reliable electric supply to the Village of Tupper for the first time,” said Brian L. Houseal, Executive Director of the Adirondack Council, the Adirondack Park’s largest environmental organization. “Frequent power outages were an unfortunate fact of life, and were dangerous in the winter. We worked with the community, National Grid and the New York Power Authority, and the Department of Environmental Conservation to find a sensible route for the new line. Then we worked statewide to gain attention and approval for the Constitutional Amendment that allowed this to happen.

“We thank Senator Joseph Griffo and Assemblyman Bob Sweeney for their help in bringing this to a successful conclusion,” Houseal said. The bill was A.8214 (Sweeney)/S. 4861-A (Griffo).

The Adirondack Council and the other parties agreed on a roadside line bringing power from Stark Falls Reservoir in Colton south to the Village of Tupper Lake. They found that this route would cause the least environmental disturbance, even though it would cross the Forest Preserve. Power lines and other privately owned facilities are not allowed on the Forest Preserve. A land swap was needed.

“That route required the use of six acres of roadside at the edge of the ‘forever wild’ state Forest Preserve along State Route 56 in Colton,” Houseal said. “So we worked with the State Legislature to gain approval for a resolution authorizing a vote on the issue in the 2009 general election. The Constitutional Amendment authorized the state to swap those six acres of roadside for 10 or more acres of lands to be added back into the Forest Preserve.”

National Grid eventually agreed to purchase 20 acres of land along the Raquette River, not far from the power line, for addition to the Forest Preserve. All Constitutional Amendments require passage by two separately elected State Legislatures, in this case the 2007-08 and 2009-2010 legislatures, and then a whole-state referendum.

Back in the fall of 2009, the Adirondack Council’s staff traveled to every city in New York that had its own daily newspaper, major radio station or television station, to explain the

amendment and encourage voters to seek it out on the ballot. That resulted in dozens of news articles and editorials calling on voters to approve the amendment. It passed by a two-to-one margin.

“It is gratifying to see the wonderful new lands that will be added to the public Forest Preserve when the Governor signs this bill,” Houseal said. “The first test any amendment must pass before we will support it is whether it will provide an overwhelming benefit to the Forest Preserve. This one passed that test easily, and it had the extra benefit of making Tupper Lake a safer place to live and work. A reliable power supply should also help spur economic development.”

Founded in 1975, the Adirondack Council is a privately funded, not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park. The Council carries out its missions through research, education, advocacy and legal action. The Adirondack Council’s members live in all 50 United States.

Attached are a [map](#) (PDF) of the roadside area needed for the power line – and an explanation of the alternatives – and a [map](#) (JPEG) of the area to be added to the Forest Preserve.

### **Raquette Lake Swap Still Stalled**

As we noted in our State of the Park 2010 report, the 2007 Constitutional Amendment that authorized a land swap between the NYS Forest Preserve and the Town of Long Lake is still incomplete. The town wanted two acres of Forest Preserve to drill new drinking water wells for the hamlet of Raquette Lake. The voters agreed in 2007, but the town has yet to identify a suitable parcel of land to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation for a swap.

That swap cannot be carried out until the town acquires, or agrees to give up, a parcel of forest to compensate the public for the lands it took in 2007. Then, the Legislature can pass a bill similar to this one. The town has been using the former Forest Preserve around its new wells for four years, but the people of the state remain uncompensated for that loss of Forest Preserve.